

# Common Ground

## Spotlight on Mexican Americans:

"THE MEXICAN PROBLEM" Carey McWilliams

PACHUCO Gene L. Coon

PHOTOGRAPHS Marion Palfi

FINGER-TIP COATS ARE THE STYLE Beatrice Griffith

BARANYA COUNTY TO AMERICA Emil Lengyel

LISTEN TO MY HEART Jo Sinclair

PROGRESS REPORT Arnold M. Rose

THE SPARTAN GREEKS OF BRIDGETOWN:

COMMUNITY COHESION J. Mayone Stykos

— and others —

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COMMON GROUND

Common Council for American Unity

20 West 40 Street

New York 18, N.Y.

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COMMON GROUND. Published quarterly by Common Council for American Unity. \$2.00 a year; 50 cents a copy. Copyright 1948, by Common Council for American Unity, Incorporated. Printed at the Princeton University Press. Editorial and publication office, 20 West 40th Street, New York 18, New York. Manuscripts must be accompanied by stamped, self-addressed envelopes. Entered as second-class matter September 15, 1940, at the post office at New York, New York, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

COMMON GROUND is published by the COMMON COUNCIL FOR AMERICAN UNITY,  
Willkie Memorial Building, 20 West 40th Street, New York 18, N.Y.

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To further an appreciation of what each group has contributed to America, to uphold the freedom to be different, and to encourage the growth of an American culture which will be truly representative of all the elements that make up the American people.

To overcome intolerance and discrimination because of national origin, race, or creed.

To help the foreign-born and their children solve their special problems of adjustment, know and value their particular cultural heritage, and share fully and constructively in American life.

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## “THE MEXICAN PROBLEM”

CAREY McWILLIAMS

IN THE vast library of books and documents about ethnic and minority problems in the United States, one of the largest sections is devoted to “the Mexican problem.” There is a curious consistency about the documents in this section. For one thing, the singular is always used. Presumably, also, no problem existed, singular or plural, prior to 1920. Reader’s Guide lists 51 articles on “the Mexican problem” from 1920 to 1930 by comparison with 19 articles on the same subject for the previous decade.

It will also be found that the documents devoted to the problem have been deeply colored by the “social work” approach. With the passage of the 1924 Immigration Act, the immigrant social agencies and Americanization institutes simply had to discover a new “problem,” and it was the Mexican’s misfortune to appear on the scene, sombrero and all, concurrently with the impending liquidation of these agencies. As a consequence, he was promptly adopted as America’s No. 1 immigrant problem. The whole apparatus of immigrant-aid social work, with its morose preoccupation with consequences rather than causes, was thereupon transferred to Mexican immigration with little realization that this immigration might not be, in all respects, identical with European immigration.

Once assembled and classified, this depressing mass of social data was consistently interpreted in terms of what it revealed about the inadequacies and the weaknesses of the Mexican character. The data “proved” that Mexicans lacked leadership, discipline, and organization; that they segregated themselves; that they were lacking in thrift and enterprise, and so forth. A mountainous collection of masters’ theses “proved” conclusively that Spanish-speaking children were “retarded” because, on the basis of various so-called intelligence tests, they did not measure up to the intellectual calibre of Anglo-American students. Most of this theorizing was heavily weighted with gratuitous assumptions about Mexicans and Indians. Paradoxically, the more sympathetic the writer, the greater seems to have been the implied condescension. All in all, the conclusion is unavoidable that Mexicans have been regarded as the essence of “the Mexican problem.”

The use of this deceptive, catch-all phrase has consistently beclouded the real issues by focusing attention on consequences rather than on causes. Actually the basic issues have always had to do with Anglo-Hispano relations in a particular historical setting as influenced by a specific set of cultural, economic, geographical, and social forces. Once these

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factors are seen in proper perspective, if only in outline form, the elusive character of "the Mexican problem" vanishes into thin air.

### II

In unraveling the real issues, the first question to be raised is: what kind of minority is the Mexican minority? Unlike most European minorities in America, Mexicans have been rooted in space—in a particular region—over a long period of years. One of the important factors in "the problem" has always been their relation to, and their feeling about, the region in which they are concentrated. As Dr. Zeleny has pointed out, they are more like the typical minority in Europe than like the typical European minority in the United States. Mexicans were annexed by conquest, along with the territory they occupied, and, in effect, their cultural autonomy was guaranteed by a treaty.

About the closest parallel that can be found in this hemisphere for the Mexican minority is that of the French-Canadians in Quebec. The parallel would be closer, of course, if the Province of Quebec were part of the United States. Then New Mexico could be regarded as the Quebec of the Mexicans and the million or so French-Canadians in the United States might be compared with the Mexican immigrants outside New Mexico. Like the Mexicans, the French-Canadians were "here first"; hence they have shown much the same tenacity about *notre langue*, *notre foi*, *nos traditions* that Mexicans have shown. With French-Canadians in the United States the question of *la survivance* is as important as the future of *la raza* is to most Mexicans. Like the French-Canadians in New England, the Spanish-speaking people know that they are Americans. Yet, as Dr. Campa points out, they never speak of themselves in Spanish as *nosotros los americanos* any

more than they say *nosotros los españoles*.

What a minority is called by others or how it likes to think of itself is less important than the way members of the minority actually speak of themselves in moments of "unbuttoned frankness." In such moments, Mexican Americans are likely to say *nosotros*, *nuestra gente*, *la raza*, or *nosotros los mexicanos*. But, as Dr. Campa carefully emphasizes, by *mexicanos* they do not mean Mexicans; nor can it be translated as such. Like the French-Canadians, and, I suppose, like all annexed or conquered peoples, the Mexicans have been deeply influenced by discrimination. French culture is indigenous to Quebec in much the same sense that Spanish culture is indigenous to New Mexico. Thus there is a time-factor and a space-factor involved in both situations not found in the usual European immigrant "problem" in America. (See *The Shadows of the Trees* by Jacques Ducharme, 1943. Many of the observations which Ducharme makes about French-Canadians in New England could be applied, with little modification, to Mexicans in the Southwest.)

The spatial relation of Mexico to the Southwest, the proximity of the border, the closeness of the parent group, are all important factors in "the Mexican problem." It should also be noted that relations between Anglos and Hispanos have been constantly influenced by the state of relations between the United States and Mexico. The assimilation of Italian immigrants might have assumed a different form, for example, if the United States and Italy had been involved in conflict for a hundred years. In the past, the attitude of Mexican consuls in the Southwest has been much more possessive and paternal than that of Italian consuls toward Italian immigrants. Historically the Southwest was once a part of Mexico—an obvious but all-important

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factor. Geographically the Southwest is one with the northern portions of Mexico, and wars do not alter the facts of geography. Thus a specific set of historical and geographical factors are very much a part of "the Mexican problem."

Furthermore, a unique set of cultural factors has also been involved. Three cultures, not two, have fought for supremacy in the Southwest: Anglo, Hispano, and Indian. In fact, the three-sided relationship is so complex, interrelated, and historically interwoven as to defy analysis. Indians were a conquered race despised by Anglo-Americans. Mexicans are related to Indians by race and culture, with the Indian part of their cultural and racial inheritance being more important than the Spanish. Mexicans were consistently equated with Indians by the race-conscious Anglo-Americans. Quite apart from the question of how much Indian intermixture there is in the Mexican minority, Mexicans are regarded as a racial minority in the Southwest.

### III

In the United States a minority has long existed within the Mexican minority: the native-born of native-born parents. The census of 1930 estimated the size of this group as 264,338, although it is easily twice this size or larger. The attitude of this buffer group toward the immigrants and of the immigrants toward them has always been highly ambivalent. To the native-born, the immigrant is a *cholo* or *chicano*; to the immigrant, the native-born is a *pocho*. The immigrant is likely to be "darker," more Indian, than the native-born. The immigrant stresses his Mexican-Indian background; the native-born boasts of his "Spanish" inheritance in blood and culture. The immigrant is, also, more likely to be illiterate and to know less English. Despite the division between the two groups,

however, the Anglo-Americans regard them as one—as Mexican—except for ceremonial occasions when elements of the native-born become "Spanish." On the other hand, the native-born seek to distinguish their status, in the eyes of the Anglo-Americans, by referring to themselves as Spanish Colonials, Latin Americans, Spanish Americans, "native Californians," and similar terms.

While some of the native-born have "passed" completely into the Anglo-American world, the majority have not been able to do so nor have they always wished to do so. Constant discrimination, which became more pronounced with the arrival of the immigrants, has complicated their existence and stiffened their resistance to absorption. The Anglo-Americans, in fact, have made it impossible for them to dissociate themselves, as a group, from the immigrants. Noting this fact, the immigrants have taunted the native-born with the mockery of their citizenship. Criticizing the native-born as renegades, they have derided their customs, morals, and affectations. Dr. Gamio quotes a popular corrido of the immigrants called *El Renegado*, "The Renegade," which he translates as follows:

You go along showing off  
In a big automobile.  
You call me a pauper  
And dead with hunger  
And what you don't remember is  
That on my farm  
You went around almost naked  
And without sandals.  
This happens to many  
That I know here  
When they learn a little  
American  
And dress up like dudes,  
And go to the dance.  
But he who denies his race  
Is the most miserable creature.

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There is nothing in the world  
So vile as he,  
The mean figure of the renegade.  
And although far from you,  
Dear Fatherland,  
Continual revolutions  
Have cast me out—  
A good Mexican  
Never disowns  
The dear fatherland  
Of his affections.

(This corrido, incidentally, originated in Los Angeles.)

Paradoxically, however, both groups regard themselves as members of *la raza*. They often live in the same districts, speak the same language, attend the same church, and frequently intermarry. Yet the distinction—the cleavage—remains. In some respects, the native-born occupy somewhat the same relation to the immigrants that “light” middle-class Negroes occupy to the masses of “dark” Negroes. The relationship between the two groups is, also, somewhat similar to that between German Jews and Russian Jews.

It is a truism that the expectations which the dominant group hold forth to a minority influence the behavior and attitude of the minority. In this respect, the position of the native-born has been ambiguous. In some circles they are expected to behave “like Mexicans”; elsewhere this expectation is reversed and the tactful assumption is made that they are “Spanish” or “American.” This ambiguity explains the conflicting attitudes which the native-born have toward “assimilation.” I know a successful young Mexican American lawyer in Southern California—one of the few in the region—who takes a most extreme view toward “Americanization.” He believes that Mexicans should cut loose entirely from their Mexican background; that they should “mix” more with Anglo-Americans; and that they should, as he says, “quit beef-

ing” about discrimination. But this individual has been highly favored by circumstances, background, and upbringing. It is probably true, as he contends, that he



has encountered little discrimination (although he makes this point a little too emphatically); but other Mexican Americans, “darker” than he is, less favored by circumstances, have encountered consistent discrimination and are much less anxious to “mix” with Anglo-Americans.

To some extent the two groups are separated by a “third” culture—that of the native-born of Mexican descent. “The cultural contacts of the Mexican immi-

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grants in the United States," writes Dr. Gamio, "are complicated by the fact that besides the modern American civilization there is another and different Mexican-American culture, that of the Americans of Mexican origin. This civilization is American nominally, and exhibits the principal material aspects of modern American civilization, but intellectually and emotionally it lives in local Mexican traditions. This element (the native-born) can be said to constitute a peculiar nationality, within the United States. To the immigrant it is a sort of go-between, since these Mexican-Americans do not feel racial prejudice against them. Though a struggle occurs between the purely Mexican culture and this semi-Mexican, in the end it often absorbs the Mexican immigrant. With it there can occur a closer fusion than with the purely American culture, for with the latter it already shares many traits, while the great difference between the purely American and the purely Mexican, together with the fact of race prejudice, makes an intellectual, emotional, and traditional disparity too great to be bridged rapidly and perhaps never completely."

### IV

The central plateau region of Mexico has fed immigrants to Texas; the northern mesa and northwestern coastal sections to California. Immigrants from these sections have had certain distinct handicaps. Most have been illiterate; a great many were peons in Mexico; and they have been extremely poor (actually undernourished, according to Dr. Gamio). In the main, also, they have come from a society which, prior to 1910, was calculated to rob individuals of a sense of enterprise, thrift, and initiative.

Most Mexican immigrants have come to the United States from a folk culture. A folk culture, writes Dr. Robert Red-

field, is a small, isolated, non-literate, homogeneous society. Intimate communication among the members of the society is matched by a lack of communication with the exterior world. It is a society in which people have little access to the thought and experience of the past and in which "oral tradition has no check or competitor." The people are much alike and have a strong sense of belonging together, and the ways by which recurrent problems are solved have been conventionalized. Economically the folk society is independent of other societies: the people produce what they consume and consume what they produce. There is not much division of labor—one person doing what another does. The tools of production are few and simple. There are no tools to make tools; no rapid, multiple machine manufacture; little use of natural power. "Life," writes Dr. Redfield, "for the member of the folk society, is not one activity and then another and different one; it is one large activity out of which one part may not be separated without affecting the rest." Since behavior is strongly influenced by convention, there is little disposition to reflect upon traditional acts or to consider them objectively and critically. Behavior is personal with even nature, the animals, and the environment being personalized and invested with human attributes. Obviously the members of such a society are not prepared for a rapid transition to a society which, at nearly every point, negates the values of their folk culture.

In many areas of Mexico, the folk culture centered in the feudalistic *hacienda* which provided no opportunity for change in status. Ideas of justice were personalized, based on the whims and fancies of the *haciendado*. Money was meaningless, trade was limited, and the division of labor was simple. Superimposed on this folk society, the ceremonial

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aspect of the Catholic Church was emphasized somewhat to the detriment of its ethical teachings. Native folk practices were interwoven with church ritual, and a "magical mentality" attributed illnesses to *los aires* or evil spirits. Dr. Gamio gives a long list of herbs which he found on sale at a Chicago drug store that catered to Mexican immigrants; and one can still see a weird variety of herbs, leeches, and patent medicines on sale in the Mexican drug stores in Los Angeles. Slight wonder, then, that the Mexican peon faltered and became confused and often demoralized when he came in close contact with a highly industrialized, urban society.

Uniformly his culturally conditioned traits have been interpreted in the Southwest as racial or biological. The Mexican was "lawless" and "violent" because he had Indian descent; he was "shiftless and improvident" because such was his nature; his excellence as a stoop-laborer consisted precisely in the fact that he did not aspire to land ownership. Point by point his cultural traits re-enforced the earlier stereotype of "the Mexican."

In the Southwest the immigrant faced a set of formidable handicaps. A strong prejudice had existed in the region against Mexicans for many years; the tradition of dominance was interwoven into the fabric of the community; generations had been steeped in the Mexican stereotype. Almost by instinct, Anglo-Americans equated Mexicans with Indians. The language handicap would have been much less formidable had the immigrant been literate; but learning to read and write in English involved first learning to read and write in Spanish. Unskilled, in the American sense, the immigrant had little acquaintance with trade-unionism. Even his religion, in such muscularly Protestant states as Texas, served to set him apart.

But his greatest handicap consisted in the migratory character of his employ-

ment. "One assimilates a new culture," writes Dr. Norman Humphrey, "as one did the old one, largely through perception and imitation of examples." Traveling over a wide territory, usually in the company of other Spanish-speaking workers, bossed by a Mexican foreman, living in a Mexican labor camp or shack-town, the immigrant had few chances to learn Anglo-American ways by example or imitation. The presence of a large buffer group of native-born Mexican Americans also retarded assimilation. The Mexican, moreover, was a late immigrant — "the last man in."

"Near the center of a culture," writes Dr. Humphrey, "are the layers of meaning identified as values; while, at the periphery, are the utilitarian symbols." When two sharply contrasting cultures come in contact, the utilitarian symbols of each are brought into immediate juxtaposition: "utilitarian meaning competes with utilitarian meaning and, in the long run, the meaning having the greater utility supplants that which has the less." Universally Mexican immigrants, supposedly "incapable of assimilation," have rapidly assimilated the utilitarian phases of Anglo-American culture. High on the list of items which 2,104 immigrants brought back to Mexico from the United States, according to Dr. Gamio, were such items as bathtubs, wooden and metal toilets, refrigerators, metal kitchen utensils, washing machines, metal stoves, sewing machines, and automobiles (37 per cent returned with cars).

But where the values of the two cultures have been in juxtaposition, the immigrant has been less willing to abandon or to modify the imported cultural pattern. "Spanish speech is retained," writes Dr. Humphrey, "and *la raza* is esteemed." Similarly Dr. Gamio has found that the intellectual culture of Mexico has continued to exert a great influence among

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Mexican Americans; that, where values are concerned, they prefer to remain Mexicans. It should be noted, however, that these conclusions were based on studies made in the Southwest. Throughout the Southwest immigrants have been drawn within the folds of existing colonies, and opportunities to learn "by perception and imitation," on an individual basis, have been minimized. Immigrants are more limited in their choice of residence, employment, and associations than in the northern industrial communities where a different pattern of acculturation prevails. Persistent discrimination has repelled the immigrant from the value-side of Anglo-American culture.

### V

The basic factor retarding the assimilation of the Mexican immigrant, at all levels, has been the pattern of his employment. A very large proportion of Mexican immigrants were imported, often under contract, by particular employers, for employment in particular industries at particular tasks. With few exceptions, only a particular class of employers has employed Mexican labor in the Southwest: large-scale industrial enterprises, railroads, smelters, copper mines, sugar-beet refineries, farm-factories, large fruit and vegetable exchanges. These concerns have employed many Mexicans, in gangs, crews, and by families, as in the sugar-beet industry. It is not the individual who has been employed but the group. If a concern employs Mexicans, it will usually be found that they dominate or are used exclusively in specific types of employment rather than being scattered through the plant. The universality of this pattern was clearly established in a study made in California in 1930.

In this same study it was found that the jobs for which Mexicans were employed *en masse* had certain basic characteristics:

they were undesirable by location (as section-hand jobs on the desert sections of the rail lines, or as unskilled labor in desert mines and cement plants); they were often dead-end types of employment; and the employment was often seasonal or casual. Between 1914 and 1919 the number of Mexicans in the citrus industry in California increased from 2,317 to 7,004 (30 per cent of the total); today some 22,000 Mexicans are employed. In effect, Mexicans work, not for individual citrus growers, but for the California Fruit Growers Exchange. The Exchange bears about the same relationship to "farming" that the typical industrial plant in which Mexicans are employed bears to "business": it is highly organized; it represents an enormous capital investment; and it is an enterprise which provides no ladder of advancement for field and packing-house employees. One could count on the fingers of one hand the number of Mexicans who have become owners of citrus groves or who have risen to managerial positions in the Exchange.

To keep Mexicans earmarked for exclusive employment in a few large-scale industries in the lowest brackets of employment, their employers have set them apart from other employees in separate camps, in company towns, and in segregated colonias. Traditionally, Mexicans have been paid less than Anglo-Americans for the same jobs. These invidious distinctions have re-enforced the Mexican stereotype and placed a premium on prejudice. By employing large numbers of Mexicans for particular types of work, employers have arbitrarily limited the immigrants' chance for the type of acculturation that comes from association with other workers on the job. The pattern of employment has, in turn, dictated the type and location of residence. Segregated residential areas have resulted in

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segregated schools; segregated schools have re-enforced the stereotype and limited opportunities for acculturation. In setting this merry-go-round in motion, the pattern of employment has been of crucial importance, for it has stamped the Mexican as "inferior" and invested the stereotype with an appearance of reality. "There are people," writes Bogardus, "who insist on thinking that the Mexican is unable to rise above an unskilled labor level. They cannot visualize a Mexican immigrant on any other plane."

The pattern of employment has consistently fostered prejudice by jeopardizing, or appearing to threaten, the standards of the trade-unions. Always opposed to Mexican immigration, the American Federation of Labor has permitted many of its affiliates to bar Mexicans from membership. Exclusion from trade-unions has, of course, closed another avenue of escape from the merry-go-round and provided a further sanction for the stereotype. By keeping Mexicans segregated occupationally, employers have created a situation in which the skilled labor groups have naturally regarded Mexicans

also apparent that the use which has been made of Mexican labor has tended to drive out Anglo-American small farmers and tenants. With the labor of the small farmer and tenant being necessarily in competition with the paid labor of the large-scale farm, cheap agricultural wage rates have been a powerful factor working toward concentration in farm ownership and production. In the various congressional hearings on Mexican immigration, small farmers were invariably lined up with organized labor in opposition to Mexican immigration. While the conflict has always been economic, it has consistently been rationalized as racial or cultural in character.

The far-reaching ramifications of the pattern of employment can scarcely be overemphasized. In the citrus-belt communities, the California Fruit Growers Exchange has long exercised a decisive influence on local affairs. It has been in a position to influence—and has not hesitated to influence—local school-board policies and to affect the attitude of the police, the courts, and the townspeople. When Mexican workers have gone on strike, the townspeople have generally been arrayed against them. Therefore it is patently nonsensical to regard segregated schools for Mexicans as a more or less "natural" outgrowth of "differences," racial or cultural in character, between Anglos and Hispanos. A copper town is dominated by the mine ownership and management; a sugar-beet town reflects the attitude and policies of the sugar-beet refineries, etc., etc.

## VI

Scattered throughout Southern California outside Los Angeles are, perhaps, 150,000 or 200,000 Mexicans and Mexican Americans, for the most part immigrants or the sons and daughters of immigrants. Approximately 30 per cent



as group competitors rather than as individual employees. The nature of the situation has thus inclined such groups as the AFL to take a narrow, particularistic view of Mexican immigration and to regard Mexican labor as "cheap labor."

In some areas, as in West Texas, it is

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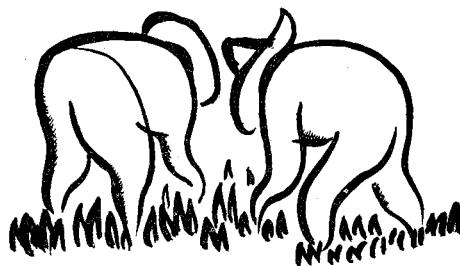
of the total is made up of "aliens," but the alien element is rapidly diminishing. Most of these people—perhaps 80 per cent of them—live in "colonies" or *colonias* which vary in size from a cluster of small homes or shacks to communities of four, five, six, eight, and ten thousand people (Community Organization in Mexican American Communities by Fred W. Ross, 1947).

The history of these settlements is almost uniformly the same. They came into existence some twenty or thirty years ago when the first immigrants began to arrive. Most are located in unincorporated areas adjacent to a town or city but invariably on "the other side" of something: a railroad track, a bridge, a river, or a highway. Site location has been determined by a combination of factors: low wages, cheap rents, low land values, prejudice, closeness to employment, undesirability of the site, etc. None of the colonies was laid out or planned as a community, although a few are located on the sites of abandoned boom towns. Some are outgrowths of labor camps; others have been grafted on a *barrio* of the pre-1900 vintage; while a few have come into existence more or less accidentally.

North Town, a community near Upland, is a fairly typical *colonia*. Located on the site of an abandoned subdivision, it is within fifteen-minutes driving radius of the wineries, packing houses, truck farms, and citrus groves where most of the residents are employed. Here a few Mexican families lived before the great wave of migration began, and to these residents the immigrants attached themselves. Today some 1,500 Mexicans live in the six square blocks of North Town, surrounded on all sides by agricultural land. North Town has a small grocery store, a pool hall, and a motion picture theatre. Most of the residents, however,

make their purchases in Upland. Two or three blocks from the village is an elementary school in which the enrollment is 95 per cent Mexican.

With as many as three shacks to a lot, the structures are unpainted, weather-beaten, and dilapidated. The average



house consists of two or three rooms and was built of scrap lumber, boxes, and discarded odds-and-ends of material. Ten, twenty, and thirty years old, the houses are extremely clean and neat on the inside and much effort has obviously gone into an effort to give them an attractive appearance. Virtually all the homes lack inside toilets and baths, and a large number are without electricity. Almost every family owns an automobile, a radio, and any number of American-made household gadgets of one kind or another. The community being unincorporated, almost all forms of municipal service are lacking. Water is purchased from a private owner at rates higher than those paid by the conspicuously successful residents of Upland.

It would be misleading, however, to convey the impression that the location of the *colonias* was accidental or that it has been determined by the natural play of social forces. On the contrary, there is a sense in which it would be accurate to say that the location of the *colonias* has been carefully planned. Located at just sufficiently inconvenient distances from the parent community, it naturally became most convenient to establish

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separate schools and to minimize civic conveniences in the satellite colonia. "Plainly," writes Mr. Ross, "it was never intended that the colonias were to be a part of the wider community; rather, it was meant that they were to be apart from it in every way; colonia residents were to live apart, work apart, play apart, worship apart, and unfortunately trade, in some cases, apart."

The physical isolation of the colonias has naturally bred a social and psychological isolation. As more and more barriers were erected, the walls began to grow higher, to thicken, and finally to coalesce on all sides. The building of the walls, as Mr. Ross puts it, "went on concomitantly from without and from within the colonia, layer by layer, tier by tier." While the walls may have the appearance of being natural growths, they are really man-made. For the relationship that finally emerged between parent and satellite community is the civic counterpart of the relationship between the California Fruit Growers Exchange and its Mexican employees.

Living in ramshackle homes in cluttered-up, run-down shantytowns, set apart from their neighbors, denied even the minimum civic services, the residents of the colonia have come to resent the fenced-in character of their existence. They are perfectly well aware of the fact that they are not wanted, for their segregation is enforced by law as well as by custom and opinion.

When public-spirited citizens in the parent community have sought "to do something about the Mexican problem," they have generally sought to impose a pattern on the colonia from without. Establishing a clinic or reading room or social center in the colonia has no doubt been helpful; but it has not changed, in the slightest degree, the relationship between parent and satellite community.

In the face of this reality, it is annoying to hear Anglo-Americans expatiate about the Mexicans' "inferiority complex" and to charge them with being clannish and withdrawn. Friendly, warm-hearted, and generous to a fault, it would be difficult to find a people more readily disposed to mingle with other groups than the Spanish-speaking people of the Southwest. Their "inferiority complex" is really a misnomer for a defeatist attitude arising from their frustration at being unable to break out of the colonia.

Resenting the implication of inferiority that attaches to segregated schools and being well aware of economic discrimination, a majority of the youngsters have not bothered to transfer from the segregated elementary school to the usually non-segregated high school. Dropping out of school at the eighth-grade level, they have been unable to compete successfully with Anglo-Americans for the more desirable jobs and have fallen back on those for which their fathers were imported. According to the census of 1930, only 5,400 Mexicans were to be found in clerical jobs; 1,092 were teachers; 93 were lawyers and judges; and 165 were physicians and surgeons—this in a population of close to three million people. Once the cycle of employment has been repeated in the second and third generation, writes Mr. Ross, "the insidious process, which began so long ago with low wages and relatively low, dominant group hostility, almost swings full circle." By the time this has happened, the hostility of the dominant group is fully reciprocated. (See: "They Fenced Tolerance In" by Dallas Johnson, Survey, July 1947, pp. 398-400.)

Hedged in by group hostility, the immigrants long ago lost interest in citizenship. Lack of funds, the language difficulty, and illiteracy were important factors, but not nearly so influential as seg-

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regation and discrimination. Mexicans have never been encouraged by prevailing community attitudes to become citizens. Bogardus, who studied the problem years ago, concluded that in both rural and urban areas segregation was primarily responsible for the lack of interest in citizenship. For the last twenty years, the number of Mexicans who have been naturalized has averaged about a hundred a year. In a Mexican community of 50,000 in California, Bogardus found only 250 registered voters in 1928, not all of whom were of Mexican descent. In the same year, Charles A. Thompson reported that only two or three naturalization petitions a year were filed in El Paso with a Mexican population of 50,000. To some extent, of course, this reluctance to seek naturalization may be traced to the fact that so many Mexican immigrants are in the United States illegally; but this, too, has

age" politically, an immediate change has been noted in the attitude of the Anglo-Americans. Anglo-American politicians cannot afford to ignore the needs of Mexican American communities if the residents will assert their political rights. Acting in liaison with the well organized Negro community in Los Angeles, for instance, Mexicans could easily become a balance-of-power group.

While a few political victories have been won, it requires no special insight to foresee that a point will soon be reached when a serious struggle will develop between Anglos and Hispanos. The average Anglo-American community will accept, if somewhat reluctantly, one Mexican American on the city council or the school board; but there are communities in which Mexican Americans could elect a majority of the office holders. In these communities, resistances will stiffen, for the stakes are high. Once this has happened, Mexican Americans will have to seek out allies in those segments of the Anglo-American community which have long been disposed to co-operate with them, namely, in the liberal-labor-progressive groups. By comparison with Negroes, Mexicans are still novices in the tactics and strategy of minority group action and politics.

## VII

been a secondary factor. Voluntary disfranchisement, whatever the cause, has perpetuated the caste-like social structure in which Mexicans are encased.

The second generation, however, has begun to show a lively interest in the ballot. Residents of a few citrus-belt settlements have, in recent years, elected Mexican Americans to school boards and city councils and have begun to exercise a measure of their great potential political strength. Wherever they have "come of



In the midwest industrial centers, Mexicans have been brought into much sharper and fuller contact with Anglo-American culture than in the Southwest. Here the colony is strikingly similar to that of the typical "foreign" settlement. Much less mobile than their compatriots in the Southwest, Mexicans in Chicago and Detroit work with members of other nationality groups in highly mechanized industries. The boundaries of the *colonia* are not sharply defined and, in some cases, have already disappeared.

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Since nearly one-third of the "northern" Mexicans have been *solos* or single men, the rate of intermarriage has been higher than in the Southwest. Originally concentrated in packing plants, tanneries, steel mills, foundries, and railroad yards, Mexican labor is today more widely and more typically distributed. Generally speaking, Mexicans are less sharply set apart in the midwest industrial centers than in the Southwest. In Chicago and Detroit, Mexicans are merely another immigrant group; in the Southwest they are an indigenous people.

The tendency to regard Mexicans as a "racial minority" is also much less pronounced in the Midwest and there is less discrimination. As might be expected, therefore, a much higher proportion have applied for citizenship, and English tends to be substituted for Spanish as the language of the home (Social Forces, March, 1944, pp. 332-335). The lack of cohesion and unity in these colonies is reflected in many ways. For example, Archbishop Mooney in Detroit has strongly discouraged the development of group-consciousness among his Mexican parishioners. Priests have been forbidden to give any encouragement to the idea of a church especially for Mexicans and have been warned that no racial or nationality distinctions, so far as Mexicans are concerned, will be tolerated. Perhaps no one detail points up the contrast between these communities and those in the Southwest more sharply than Dr. Humphrey's comment that in Detroit Mexicans refer to themselves simply as "Mexicans" and show little sensitivity to the term.

The story of the Lorain, Ohio, colony is quite typical of the midwest settlements which nowadays total around 75,000 Mexicans. In 1923 the National Tube Company, an affiliate of United States Steel Corporation, imported 1,500

Mexicans from Texas to replace an equal number of Negroes (throughout the Midwest, Mexicans have been used to "dilute" or "thin out" Negro labor). From time to time the colony was augmented by new recruits and by replacements drawn to Lorain from the beet fields of the Midwest. At first most of the Mexicans lived in the box-cars in which they had traveled north, but most of them have since moved into small houses and apartments. Originally employed by National Tube or the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, many have now secured jobs in restaurants, dry-cleaning shops, trucking firms, and other miscellaneous occupations.

The homes in Lorain reflect a striking mixture of the two cultures. "American radios," writes Robert O. O'Brien, "are covered with zarapes and bits of Indian pottery. Stone metates grind out corn which is cooked on gas and even on electric stoves. American phonographs play South American tangos and Mexican marches. Mexican trunks contain a mixture of objects from Gringo Sunday clothes to old-country sombreros. Corona typewriters in vivid colors compete for space with bits of cactus from the Southwest. Bottles of medicine from Lorain doctors vie with patent medicines or Mexican 'teas' for position on the bathroom shelf. . . . American 'canned' food is supplemented by enchiladas, chili verde, and tamales." A Lorain merchant sold thirty-six typewriters to Mexican residents in a year, all but two of them being equipped with a Spanish-language keyboard. Here the second generation is already far removed from the first, and the parents are vainly seeking to arrest the process by attempting to "Mexicanize" their children. It is a foregone conclusion that the northern Mexican settlements will have largely vanished in another generation.

## "THE MEXICAN PROBLEM"

### VIII

The oldest settlers in Los Angeles, Mexicans were pushed aside and swept under by the extraordinary velocity and volume of Anglo-American migration after the first great land booms in the '80s. Isabel Sherrick, a midwest journalist, reported in the 1880s that the Mexicans "little by little are being crowded out and one by one the adobes are falling into ruins or giving way to the thrifty homes of Americans." Some of the sections in which Mexicans formerly lived are today occupied by factories, terminal facilities, and office buildings.

The typical residence of Mexicans in early-day Los Angeles was the "house court" derived from the Mexican *vecindad*: a sort of tenement made up of a number of one and two-room dwellings built around a court with a common water supply and outdoor toilets. This same type of settlement, similar to the *plaza*, is still quite common in Los Angeles, San Antonio, and El Paso. House-courts multiplied in Los Angeles as the demand for Mexican housing became acute with high land costs and rising rents. In 1916 the city had 1,202 house-courts, occupied by 16,000 people, with 298 house-courts being occupied exclusively by Mexicans (American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 22, p. 391). In some respects, the house-court was not unlike the "bungalow courts" of a later period. The house-court areas quickly became slums as the city pushed westward from its original center in the old plaza section. One of the first studies of Mexican housing conditions indicated that some twenty or thirty thousand Mexicans were living in the courts of Old Sonoratown, near the plaza, in the shacks and houses of Chavez Ravine, and similar areas, and in the railroad labor camps. The houses and courts had dirt floors; wood was used for fuel; there were no

bathing facilities; and the outdoor hydrant and toilet, used by a group of families, was universal. Made in 1912, this survey is still up-to-the-minute so far as Mexican housing is concerned, for little improvement has occurred in the last thirty-five years.

When the great wave of Mexican immigration reached Los Angeles, an un-



incorporated section on the east side known as Belvedere became the principal area of first settlement for most of the immigrant families. "Que Maravilla!" the immigrants exclaimed when they first arrived in Los Angeles; what a marvel! what a wonderful city! Maravilla was their name for Belvedere, and Maravilla it still is to thousands of Mexicans. A city in size, it is still governed by remote control as an unincorporated area.

Aside from Maravilla, Mexicans are nowadays scattered in pockets of settlement in Los Angeles. While they are not segregated as rigidly as Negroes, the various pocket settlements are almost exclusively Mexican and are, if anything, more severely isolated than the colonias of the outlying sections. The pockets are all similar in character—Chavez Ravine,

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Happy Valley, *El Hoyo* (The Hollow), and the rest, Chavez Ravine, located in the hills between Elysian Park and North Broadway, is an old Mexican settlement. Shacks cling precariously to the hillsides and are bunched in clusters in the bottom of the ravine. For forty years or more, the section has been without most of the ordinary municipal services. At various points in the ravine, one can still see large boards on which are tacked the rural mail boxes of the residents—as though they were living, not in the heart of a great city, but in some small rural village in the Southwest. Goats, staked out on picket lines, can be seen on the hillsides; and most of the houses have chicken pens and fences. The streets are unpaved—really trails packed hard by years of travel. Garbage is usually collected from a central point, when it is collected, and the service is not equal to that which can be obtained in Anglo districts bordering the ravine. The houses are old shacks, unpainted and weather-beaten. Ancient automobile bodies clutter up the landscape and various “dumps” are scattered about. The atmosphere of the Ravine, as of *El Hoyo* and other pocket settlements, is ancient, antiquated—a survival—something pushed backward in time and subordinated.

One can make a swift turn off the heavy traffic of North Figueroa or North Broadway and be in Chavez Ravine in a minute's time. In this socially regressive dead end, goats bleat and roosters crow and children play in the dirt roads. Were it not for the faraway hum of traffic, a visitor might well imagine that he was in some remote village in New Mexico or Arizona. From the City Hall to Chavez Ravine is a five-minute drive by modern traffic-time; sociologically, the two points are separated by a time span of between fifty and seventy-five years. Today a great modern highway is being built over The

Hollow. Bulldozers have moved in, and houses have been jacked up and lifted out of the way. The shacks not directly in the way of the juggernaut, mechanical progress of the city are now left perched on the sides of the hollow, thirty years old, still badly in need of paint, gradually falling apart. Thousands of motorists will rush over the new span every hour, traveling so fast they will probably not even notice they are passing over the remains of what was once a small Mexican village.

What the Mexican immigrants probably think of Maravilla today is suggested by one of their best known corridos—*El Enganchado*—literally, “the hooked-one”—the labor contractor (quoted from *Mexican Labor in the United States* by Dr. Paul S. Taylor):

*I came under contract from Morelia  
To earn dollars was my dream,  
I bought shoes and I bought a hat  
And even put on trousers.*

*For they told me that here the dollars  
Were scattered about in heaps;  
That there were girls and theaters  
And that here everything was good fun.*

*And now I'm overwhelmed—  
I am a shoemaker by trade  
But here they say I'm a camel  
And good only for pick and shovel.*

*What good is it to know my trade  
If there are manufacturers by the score,  
And while I make two little shoes  
They turn out more than a million?*

*Many Mexicans don't care to speak  
The language their mothers taught them  
And go about saying they are Spanish  
And deny their country's flag.*

*Some are darker than chapote  
But they pretend to be Saxon;*

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They go about powdered to the back of  
the neck

And wear skirts for trousers.

The girls go about almost naked  
And call la tienda 'estor'  
They go around with dirt-streaked legs  
But with those stockings of chiffon.

Even my old woman has changed on me—  
She wears a bob-tailed dress of silk,  
Goes about painted like a piñata  
And goes at night to the dancing hall.

My kids speak perfect English  
And have no use for our Spanish  
They call me 'fader' and don't work  
And are crazy about the Charleston.

I'm tired of all this nonsense  
I'm going back to Michoacan;  
As a parting memory I leave the old  
woman  
To see if someone else wants to burden  
himself.

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This is a chapter from Carey McWilliams' book in the Peoples of America series to be published later this year by Lippincott—North From Mexico: The Spanish-Speaking of the Borderlands. Mr. McWilliams' volume on anti-Semitism, A Mask for Privilege, will be published by Little Brown in March. CG readers will remember their preview of this book in the two chapters "How Deep Are the Roots?" which appeared in our Summer and Autumn numbers.

The reader's attention is called to Marion Palfi's photographs on page 53, which document Mr. McWilliams' material, and to two short stories which illustrate and supplement his discussion: "Pachuco" by Gene L. Coon on page 49, and "Finger-Tip Coats Are the Style" by Beatrice Griffith on page 61. Both concern Mexican American youngsters growing up in the frustrating social environment Mr. McWilliams describes.

The illustrations are by Miné Okubo. For earlier material on Mexican Americans in CG see: "Mexicans to Michigan" by Carey McWilliams, Autumn 1941; "The Forgotten Mexican" also by Carey McWilliams, Spring 1943; "Pachucos in the Making" by George I. Sanchez, Autumn 1943; "Mexican Middletown" by Norman D. Humphrey, Spring 1946; "Maria" by Peggy Pond Church, Summer 1946; "What We Want Is Action" by Elis M. Tipton, Autumn 1946; "Sprinkling the Grass Roots" by Ruth D. Tuck, Spring 1947; "The Pachuco Patois" by Beatrice Griffith, Summer 1947; and "One World Kid" also by Beatrice Griffith, Winter 1948.

Two excellent novels recently published deal with Mexican Americans: Wetback by Claud Garner, Coward McCann, 1947; and White Shadows by Guy Nunn, Reynal and Hitchcock, 1947. The Very Good Neighbors by Irmengarde Eberle, Lippincott, 1945, is a good juvenile.

For further study consult: Gamio, Manuel, *The Mexican Immigrant, His Life Story*. University of Chicago Press. 1931.

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## A CAPE JASMINE DIES

JOHN FORREST MASON

CAROL rearranged the pillows on the sofa once more and straightened the rug with her foot. She looked anxiously around her living room and tried to see it through the eyes of a stranger—a complete stranger who'd never been there before, whom she'd never even met. It was really too hot to have a guest in the middle of the afternoon, especially such a—well—such an unusual guest.

She moved in front of the mirror and thought that she looked twenty-six instead of thirty-six. The slight breeze had stopped and the perspiration on her evenly browned face brought out her sun tan to better advantage. Her yellow hair was piled high on her head. Wearing it down was too hot. Anyway, she looked better this way—more cosmopolitan. On top there lay a fresh cape jasmine cut from the bush in the yard. A drop of water deposited by the brief afternoon rain that had brought no relief from the heat broke loose and rolled down a waxy petal of the flower. It seemed to come from nowhere and left no trace behind. But a large splotch appeared on her white pique dress, quickly widening until it was as large and as round as the lone china-blue button she wore on her dress. What a monstrous drop! It had really been frightening. She studied the wide, round blot carefully and knew it would dry and she didn't touch it at all with her finger. She might have made it worse by leaving a smudge. A little thing, actually, she thought, but it seemed to reassure her that she could cope with a situation when she liked.

Then, carefully taking the flower from the top of her head, she shook it gently over the floor and pinned it on the side.

Her eyes—were they tired? No, as bright and china-blue as ever. Favoring herself with a smile she turned and walked quickly to the kitchen.

"Bill, honey, did you remember to get ice?"

Bill held up a tall bag of crushed ice and leaned it in the corner of the sink. His hairline caused him to look so much older than he actually was. But his physique was still excellent—tall, nice shoulders—and no sign of a "waist."

Carol mixed herself a drink and leaned against the breakfast table. "I'll never forget the little colored girl in my art class in Chicago. Papa would have died if he'd known. I spoke to her once in the hall and thought I'd been very broad-minded and cosmopolitan." She lit a cigarette and watched the smoke lift lazily through the window screen. "Poor Ida's eyes would pop out of her head if she saw a colored girl sitting in the living room sipping a Tom Collins. Furthermore it would be all over Farish Street by morning. So I told her she could go after lunch."

She moved to the window and stared vacantly past the Morris' back porch at a large water oak beyond. "That old water oak—we used to have a swing down there when I was a child." She remembered that Larry Gardner had swung her one afternoon for such a long time that she'd been sick that night. She had jumped out of the swing, long after she'd grown tired

## A CAPE JASMINE DIES

of swinging, yelled over her shoulder, "Catch me!" and run home. It was as clear as though it had been that morning. It had been her swing and she'd done with it as she pleased; she remembered that, too.

She turned and frowned at Bill, who was noisily and unnecessarily rearranging some tools under the sink. His shirt was wet with perspiration.

"I'll probably be fired for taking the afternoon off, Carol," he said. He sounded pettish.

With forced airiness she said, "The neighbors would certainly be surprised to see her arrive in a taxi and come in the front door. I sent Barbara across the street to play with Mary. There's no telling what she'd come out with. She's embarrassing enough with most people, but I couldn't take a chance on her offhand remarks this afternoon."

Bill was on his hands and knees. He grunted a reply from under the sink.

"Uh huh," she mimicked to herself. Her enthusiasm and all her talks on being liberal had been wasted—completely wasted. Had anything sunk in at all? Had anything she'd been saying lately meant anything to him? She slammed her high-ball glass down on the table to announce her exasperation. The sharp whack precipitated the crisis of the past week's tension. Bill backed out from under the sink.

"Well, I'm damned sick of listening to all that," he began. "I've heard about 'that little colored girl in your art class in Chicago' as long as I can remember. And just because your brother is studying music in New York is no sign he has to send his 'friends' down to see us."

Carol turned her back as though she were going to cry.

"All right! All right! She'll only be here an hour and then back on the train for New Orleans. I can take anything that long—but then I want to forget about

it." He stopped in the doorway and shook his finger at his wife. "And what's more I want you to."

Carol stood behind the curtain in her parlor and watched the taxi drive up and stop in front of the white picket gate. She heard Barbara squealing but she couldn't see her. The sounds came from Mary's back yard. She didn't see any of the neighbors either. But the palms of her hands were wet and she was trembling slightly. This was annoying and she snapped at Bill for leaving the lawn mower on the sidewalk.

Her guest walked confidently up the walk. She was dark-honey colored; not pretty, but her features were nice and she had black hair that glistened in the hot afternoon sun. High-yallah, she thought and immediately reproached herself. There was a look of assurance and aplomb in the girl's face that was disconcerting and frightening. She had the sickening realization that the girl would be astute; she was an entity, a personality. She had never really looked at a colored person before—it was almost inherent to look through them.

The doorbell was like a clap of thunder and Carol walked quickly to the door. "Oh, Kay, it's good to meet you. Come in. I'm glad you had a delay here. Steve has written so much about you. Oh—uh —this is my husband, Bill."

Bill smiled pleasantly, said he was glad to know her, and they shook hands. Carol was startled—a few moments before he'd been so surly.

"Do sit down and tell me everything. How is Steve and is he learning much? He says you've been such a help to him."

Kay's complete poise was a little disquieting. Her voice was pleasant and there was no accent at all. She laughed easily and after a short time Carol found herself actually calm and enjoying the

## COMMON GROUND

visit. The thought passed through her mind once or twice that from time to time she didn't even realize that Kay was colored. She did realize though that she was talking too much and also a little too fast. She hoped she wasn't being polite to the point of being patronizing. That would be so easy to slip into.

"Bill, honey, why don't you fix us a drink?" Then turning to Kay, "Do tell me about your work. How nice to be playing in New Orleans. Have you ever been there before?"

Kay had taken off her white gloves and lit a cigarette, "No, I've never even been South before. I'm doing a benefit in New Orleans."

"Well, there's a heavenly little spot in the French Quarter where Bill and I used to eat that you'd—" Carol stopped and blushed. She hadn't realized before that Kay couldn't go to any of the places that white. . . . "Excuse me a minute and let me see how Bill's coming with the drinks."

Carol followed Bill back into the room. He was carrying a silver tray on which were arranged three Tom Collinses and napkins. He asked Kay about her trip down. "Well, you probably need a good drink after that train ride," Bill laughed. He seemed to be entirely at ease. But as he reached for a glass to hand to Kay, he tipped it over—all over the tray and the napkins.

"Bill! What a stupid thing to do!" Then with an attempt at control, "Honey, that's too bad," Carol crooned. "Run fix yourself another one, honey."

Regaining her old manner she said with studied intimacy, "Oh, we're hoping so that Steve will do well with his music. I love anything that's creative myself, you know. Anything with which one can express his emotions and feelings. I was interested in the stage and did dramatic work in college. But then—" she laughed,

nodding in the direction of the kitchen—"I met him. I did Little Theatre work until Barbara was born—that's my little girl. I wish you could see her, Kay, but she's at—she's at my mother's place in the country today. Mother adores her, of course, and Barbara loves to go out there. It's wonderful for me. I don't have to keep watching to see if she's in the street."

There was a lull in the conversation and she could hear Bill stirring a drink. Kay mentioned the flower Carol was wearing and there was another lull. This was broken when the screen door slammed and two little girls appeared in the doorway. They stopped self-consciously and then walked over to Carol.

"Mama, Mary helped me cross the street. We looked both ways. Didn't we, Mary?" She turned to Mary for confirmation. Mary was standing with her feet wide apart, staring at Kay sitting in a cozy circle with Barbara's mother. She began to swing her body from side to side, smiling the terrifying smile that only a child can produce when he is going to say exactly what he is thinking.

Carol leaned forward and her hands were cold.

"Mrs. Stuart," Mary said, "Mama don't let our maid sit down in our living room." Mary continued to smile and to swing her sash a little faster.

Carol caught Barbara by the arm and slapped her plump little thigh. "Get out! Get out in the yard and play. Both of you! Go over to Mary's house and stay until I come for you." They could still hear Barbara crying after she crossed the street. Mary followed her, skipping and singing a tune.

Kay had watched the brief scene with distress. She didn't seem embarrassed, merely distressed because of the black cloud that had appeared so suddenly, shutting out all hope of light again that

## MOTHER AND THE GRAND DUCHESS

afternoon—and maybe forever. But she smiled at Carol and said simply, "They didn't understand. You shouldn't have minded."

Carol wanted to say that she was sorry but there were no words to use. She couldn't continue the effervescent pace she had started. There seemed little more to say and no more questions to ask.

Kay asked Bill to call a taxi; it was almost train time. Carol became almost herself again knowing that it would soon be over.

At the door Kay looked taller than Carol had thought and her smooth, even features looked very strong. "Thank you, Carol. Barbara is a lovely child; she has your eyes and smile. And your brother was right—he said I'd like you both so much. Good-bye, Bill."

Carol stood at the door and waved good-bye as the taxi pulled away. She watched until it was lost behind a row of poplars down the street. She took a cigarette from the coffee table and walked nervously across the room. She reached for the flower in her hair and absently crushed it in her moist hand. Then, dropping the cigarette, she looked helplessly at Bill who was reading the newspaper and didn't look up. She ran out into the

yard and called Barbara: "Barbara! Come home, baby, right now! Come on home, baby!"

She let the flower fall to the ground as she stooped to clutch Barbara around her tiny waist. "Oh my baby, my baby! Mama's so sorry she spanked you. So sorry, darling. Daddy's going to make you a swing tomorrow down on the old water oak. Just for you. And you can swing as long as you like." She drew her closer with their cheeks pressed together and then began to cry. She sobbed for a long time and kept squeezing Barbara so hard she could hardly breathe.

Then, quietly, she stopped and looked down at the jasmine, turned brown from being touched. "Because she is just a niggah."

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John Forrest Mason was born in Alabama and brought up in Mississippi. After being graduated from the University of Mississippi, where he was editor of the University magazine, he spent three and a half years of the war as a navigator on a B-17 and a B-29. In New York after the war, he worked for a time as associate editor of the Aeronautical Engineering Review and is now free-lancing and working with the Veterans' Writers' Workshop.

## MOTHER AND THE GRAND DUCHESS

EDITH HANDLEMAN

SOME people play the piano by ear. Some people knit without instructions. Mother cooks without recipes. We do have a recipe notebook filled with "Thelma's Fruit Cake," "Mae Smith's Orange

Chiffon Pie," and "Mrs. Steely's Cookies," but it never occurs to Mother to level her own teaspoons and keep a file for her own recipes.

It was my roommate Muriel who de-

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cided to get Mother's recipe for blintzes. I'd better explain blintzes: they are an Eastern European dish, with a country-cousin relationship to the crepe suzette. The ingredients are deceptively simple; even under the eye of an expert blintz-maker, the uninitiated may spoil her first three batches. They're worth all the trouble, though, being one of the most delicious dishes there is, and Muriel decided to get it down in black and white, so she could try it sometime. She stationed herself at the kitchen table, pencil in hand, with the little notebook she used for American History lectures in front of her.

"Now, I don't know how many this will make," Mother began, taking two eggs out of the cold pantry. "About enough for two people who like blintzes very much."

"Recipe for 2 people fond of blintzes," Mike wrote.

"First you throw two eggs in the beater. Then a cup or so of water. Less if they're large eggs, of course. Some people add baking powder, but I don't. But you put in some salt."

"How much?" murmured Mike.

"Well, enough to make it taste good. Maybe a teaspoon. And you sift a cup of flour in. Or maybe more. Maybe less. Don't beat it too long, or it gets fluffy. Now taste it."

"Why?"

"To see if it tastes right. Now, the batter you get should be good and thin, without any lumps of flour, and flow as easily as water. This is too thick—the flour was quite sticky today." Before Mike could stop to measure the amount, Mother held the bowl under the faucet for a blob of water. She poked the mixture a couple of times with a spoon and pronounced it just right.

"Now you heat your pans. If they get too hot the blintzes burn, but if they're

too cool they stick." Mother put two small skillets on the stove, with just a hint of butter in each.

"How many minutes do they heat?"

"Well, how can I tell? If you have a gas range it's different. Just write down until the metal handles get nice and warm."

"Till handles hot," Mike wrote.

"Now watch." Mother poured a ladleful of the batter into one pan, sloshed it around the bottom till it covered the whole surface, and quickly poured the excess back into the bowl, leaving only a thin film on the pan. This she put back on the fire.

"Now the other one." She repeated the process, but the batter sizzled when it hit the pan. "Now you see that's too hot."

"Now you spread out a clean dish towel on your table . . ."

"What?"

" . . . and by that time the first one is probably done."

"So fast?"

"Look." Mother inverted the skillet over the clean towel, gave the pan a shake, and watched the blintz drop to the table. "If it comes out easily, it's done. That's how you know." She refilled the pan without stopping to grease it.

"Now, if you've made it right," she explained, "the blintz is a bit blistered on the bottom, very limp and soft, and almost thin enough to see through." She shook out the second one. Soon there was a stack of the soft round "leaves."

"You'd better not use butter when you try it—it's likely to make them stick. Use some tasteless shortening. You only need a trace of it anyway."

"Now the cheese." Mother put the pans in the sink. "You should use the dry cottage cheese—what they call pot cheese."

## MOTHER AND THE GRAND DUCHESS

"Yes, that's what the Duchess said in *You Can't Take It With You*," Mike put in.

"Really?" Mother looked at her. "I'll have to read that. Edith, do we have it?"

I promised to leave it on her bedside table. "Do you have any pot cheese?" I prompted.

"No. See, this is regular cottage cheese. So I'll add some bread crumbs to make it dry enough."

"How many bread crumbs?" Mike had her pencil poised.

"Well, enough. It all depends. Till it's good and dry."

"Well, how much cottage cheese?"

"Oh, I don't know. I guess this is about three-quarters of a pound."

Mike wrote, "3/4 pound cottage cheese. Enough bread crumbs."

"And a rounded teaspoon of sugar, enough salt and pepper, and an egg. Maybe two if they're little eggs and you have lots of cheese. You can press your cheese through a colander—that's what it says to do in the Settlement Cookbook recipe—but it's a waste of time."

Carefully Mother spread out one limp, cool blintz. She placed a large tablespoonful of the cheese mixture in the middle, and folded the four sides over to make a square. Then she rolled the blintz up in a compact rectangle, so that none of the cheese was exposed. Soon there was a long neat row of the little packages.

"Now, when I get ready to serve them,

I'll fry them till they're crisp—in hot butter. Some people eat them with cinnamon and sugar, but we eat them with sour cream. Serve them hot, of course." She began piling them on a plate for storage in the refrigerator.

Mike leaped up. "At any rate we can find out how many the recipe makes. I'll just count them."

"No!" Mother waved her away. "You can't do that. It's bad luck. They'll burst open during the frying if you count them."

"Another thing," she said. "When you make them—maybe they'll work out right, maybe they won't. But if you do make them, make enough. There's nothing more tantalizing than to eat only two blintzes."

Mike wrote down, "As the Grand Duchess said. . . ."

That night, taking the book of plays up to Mother's room, I looked up the Grand Duchess. Mother would be pleased to see she was in such good company. The Grand Duchess was standing in the kitchen doorway, tying on her apron, saying:

"I hope there is enough cheese. The Czar always said to me, 'Olga, do not be stingy with the blintzes.'"

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Edith Handleman, who was graduated from Syracuse University last June, and who has already become an "old-timer" in CG, is now teaching in Westbrook Junior College in Maine.

## THE SPARTAN GREEKS OF BRIDGETOWN: COMMUNITY COHESION

J. MAYONE STYCOS

*(This is the second of several articles on the Bridgetown Greek Americans by J. Mayone Stykos, who was graduated from Princeton University last June and has since then been with the Princeton population-research group working in Puerto Rico. Mr. Stykos' first article appeared in the Winter 1948 issue, and the next, concerned with the second-generation group in its reaction to the Greek American community, will appear in the Summer 1948 number.)*

PROBABLY the most striking result of my investigation of the first and second-generation Greek Americans of Bridgetown was the discovery of the unusual amount of community spirit and active co-operation the members manifested. While stresses and strains on the community do exist, they seem the exception. The unity is of two kinds, psychological and structural. The Greeks think of themselves as a unit. The sense of this unity was frequently expressed. Several persons said the community was like "one big family," while others showed in their attitudes a preference for those of Greek descent on a basis of "feeling at home," "being with your own kind," etc. Nearly all those interviewed commented on the friendliness of the Greeks in contrast to "Americans."

At Church affairs, dances, picnics, etc., I was constantly given the impression of a primary group gathering. Informality, spontaneity, and thorough mixing of the members of the crowd demonstrated the

close personal ties of the participants. These informal, friendly attitudes are seen too when members of the community visit other Greeks. The visitor is ordinarily greeted vociferously and ceremoniously, and heartily invited to make himself at home.

Much of the mechanics or etiquette of these friendly attitudes is a distinct cultural habit. Said a successful business man: "The Greek spirit is different. We are more friendly. You visit an American house and they ask you where you are staying and how you are doing. The Greek brings out food; he makes you feel at home. It is our tradition. It is not that the Americans mean anything wrong. Their ways are different." No one leaves a Greek home without being treated to food, drink, or both, and this custom seems firmly ingrained in the second generation as well. One second-generation girl informed me that she and her sisters had been thoroughly trained never to allow a visitor to leave without having him partake of some item of nourishment; and at every home or restaurant I visited I was offered at least a liqueur and often pastries.

Further evidence of the psychological "big family" atmosphere of the community is evidenced in the many remarks of the Greeks concerning the absence of class among them. Said the Greek priest after a year in the community: "The first thing that struck me about Bridgetown was the absence of class distinctions. In R—, where I was previously, there was

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a higher class of Greeks who would not mix with the others. If you began to go with them, you would hear remarks to the effect that you were deserting them (the middle or lower class) for the upper class. They are very conscious of the distinctions, and I don't believe the upper-class Greek of R—is any better off financially than the wealthier Greeks of Bridgetown. Here if a person is sociable he won't be neglected. On name days it is open house. There you go by invitation." A middle-aged woman who is not a Spartan maintained a similar attitude: "In Greece they make you to feel your class. The high class doesn't talk to the low class. Is not like that here. Pappas talks and acts to me like he has no money. We all go to the parties together, dance together, eat together. When the ones with more money come to the house, we are not proud of that; but we are proud to have the priest come. Here we like to see Greek marry Greek and no matter if the father is a dishwasher or a business man."

A girl from one of the families of greater prestige, influence, and economic success told me that all Greek girls regardless of their economic status are invited to her parties and said, "I don't know of any class distinction in Bridgetown. There may be a few families that think they're better than others, but only a few." Her aunt was of the same opinion. She observed that there was class distinction in Greece but maintained there is none in Bridgetown because the group has to stick together due to their minority position. She related an episode to illustrate this point. A girl in one of the financially better-off Greek families of the community fell in love with a chef in the family's restaurant. The parents objected strongly, and the girl waited a year trying to gain their approval. Previous to mention of marriage, the parents had held the youth

in great esteem but felt that the girl would be marrying below her station and became hostile toward the boy. Representatives of the community were chosen (relatives of the family) to go and speak to the parents in an effort to reconcile them to the community's opinion that a "Greek is a Greek." The action was successful.

The phenomenon of the absence of class seems to me a psychological evidence of unity rather than a structural one because further evidence revealed that in the actual mechanics of the community there is a great deal more class structuring than many seem willing to admit. However, most of the Greeks "think classless," even if this does not reflect the actual operating condition of the community. Some fail to see class at all; others like to believe that it is insignificant. This in itself is sufficient justification for my conclusion that the Bridgetown Greek thinks in a communal, "in group" manner.

That the Greeks are "one big family" is largely true in a structural sense also. The principal cause for unity stems from the fact that most of the group have come from the same section of Greece. This area, Sparta, is a rural agricultural section whose extreme poverty prompted emigration. When the first few Spartan settlers in Bridgetown found conditions favorable, they sent for their families, their relatives, and their friends, whom they either employed or set up in business. As a result, 80 per cent of the Greek population is Spartan, and many of the families (particularly those who would commonly be called upper class) are related by blood and marriage.

The Greeks have very strong feelings concerning their home province. A Spartan woman told me a Greek would not be enough for her daughter—he must also be a Spartan. One of the first ques-

tions asked a strange Greek is, "Where do you come from?" This is not asked, as generally in America, out of casual interest. A Greek proverb well expresses the strong patriotism for the home section. Referring to the desirability of a wife from the local province, it runs: "Better an old patched shoe from the home town than a new one from another province." To be a Spartan in Greece was to be poor and low class. In Bridgetown the Spartans rule, and to be a Spartan is to be associated with the upper class. The fact that the bulk of the population is Spartan helps explain the co-operation and community cohesion, and throws light as well on the reasons for the verbalized absence of class. Each Spartan feels himself a kind of member of the larger Spartan family in Bridgetown, and consequently thinks of his status in terms of this "family" status. In this sense the poorer Spartan in the community can feel that Louis Xenides is no better or higher class than himself: "We all came from Sparta."

Between the first and second generation, too, there is an unusual amount of co-operation and community of ideas. In many other nationalities and among the Greeks in other communities the first and second generation often live in two separate worlds, the former largely in the culture and language of the old country, the latter in the culture and language of 20th century America. That there is no unbridgeable gulf between the two generations in Bridgetown is due to the existence of a functioning Greek community, one organized and directed toward imbuing the second generation with the language and ideals of Greece. Few other nationality groups, I think, are so efficiently organized. It must be understood that the "community" is not simply a mental concept or a generalized feeling of unity. The Greeks comprise an organized,

functioning community within the larger American community. Once each year the entire adult population meets to discuss community and Church issues.

## II

The significance of the Church to the structural unity of the community cannot be overemphasized. It holds its members together psychologically because it embodies the ethics and ideals they believe in, and brings them together structurally by its group ritual and social functions. It is the main unifying structure in the community.

The average Greek is not religious in a spiritual sense. Ritual and ceremony are carried even farther in the Greek Church than in the Catholic, and the effects of them on the individual's religious attitudes seem even more marked. The average Greek observes his ritual leisurely, obeys the general ethical rules, but does not appear to take the religion very seriously in any personal, spiritual sense. This does not mean that the Church is not important in his life, for he identifies the Church with the community. Thomas and Znaniecki in speaking of the Polish "parish" in America (*The Polish Peasant in America*) show how the Church becomes more than a strictly religious center when it becomes the main common denominator for a foreign group in an alien country. "The Polish-American parish," they write, "is much more than a religious association for common worship under leadership of a priest. The unique power of the parish in Polish-American life, much greater than in even the most conservative peasant communities in Poland, cannot be explained by the predominance of religious interests which, like all other traditional social attitudes, are weakened by emigration, though they seem to be the last to disappear

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completely. The parish is indeed simply the old primary community, reorganized and concentrated."

Precisely this phenomenon can be observed with the Greeks. The Greek Orthodox Church is a national Church, and unlike international religions it symbolizes nationality, adherence to it keeping alive and bulwarking group identity. During the Turkish domination, the Greeks clung tenaciously to their Church as the only means of preserving their nationality. On a smaller scale, the same is true in Bridgetown, the Church assuming a *communal* character. The officers of the Church are the officers of the community; the Greeks date the commencement of the community with the founding of the Church, and those who do not contribute to it are not considered real members of the community; and the Church is the focal point from which radiate the other structural organizations (societies and clubs) that hold the Bridgetown Greeks together.

The Church is the rallying place for the group. Since the Church is centrally located and its basement is the hall which is used for meetings, receptions, dances, parties, etc., it serves as the social and geographic, as well as religious, center for the community. On Sundays there is Mass and Sunday School, and after Mass the crowd lingers on the steps and grounds chatting with the priest and friends over the events of the week. At such times as Christmas and Easter, the group participates in group ritual, as the Good Friday midnight service when the priest leads a procession around the outside of the Church, the members bearing lighted candles and singing. Other ritual occasions occur on the important Saint Days. Here the ritual has assumed a more secular character. To the Greek his "name day" rather than birthday is the time for celebration. The more important name

days (approximately a dozen) are considered "Holy Days," Mass is celebrated, the women abstain from work as much as possible, and a party with open house is held at all homes which have a member of the family named after the particular Saint. Then the Greek friends and acquaintances of these families will visit them, going from house to house until all the "George's," for example, are visited. At each home pastries and a liqueur will be prepared, and often there is Greek dancing. The priest, as the most respected member of the community present at all important social functions, is expected to visit members of the community on their name days.

Important, too, from a structural point of view are the clubs and organizations connected with the Church. The community is so well organized that no one is left out of its organizations, there being a club for each of the various age and sex groups. The most important of these is the men's group, the *Aheppa*, a branch of the national organization. When asked what the function of this group in Bridgetown was, one man replied, after some thought, "Well, I guess it's just to keep the Greeks together." This is probably the most important function, but the club sponsors picnics and dances, sends delegates to the annual national convention, contributes to both Greek and American charitable organizations, and at the regular meetings provides a public airing place for all matters of community interest. For boys under 21, the Sons of Pericles organization used to be maintained, but this was discontinued several years ago when the majority of the members moved into the older class group and were voted into the *Aheppa*. The *Philoptokos* is a society for the married women, and, as its title suggests, functions officially as an aid society. When funds are needed for the Church, this society

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sponsors drives, bazaars, etc., to secure them. If there is a local Greek family in economic stress, the Philoptokos provides food, clothes, and occasionally funds. For the unmarried girls under 23, there is the Maids of Athens, a national sorority. Apparently the Greeks consider that after this age the girls will be married and so provide no organization which admits unmarried girls over 23. Since there is an unusually large number of this age class of girls in Bridgetown, they took matters into their own hands last year, scrapped the sorority, and started a new one called the HEH (pronounced "Evi"), which allows all unmarried girls to be members, and which functions largely as a social group, for "bull sessions and parties." In addition to this, there is the newly organized Youth Group, which exists primarily to foster weekly dances. Also recently organized is a Sewing Circle. Each week ten to twenty women gather at the house of one of the members to sew, embroider, and talk. This was started because "Not much has been going on lately to get the Greeks together."

It is apparent then that by clubs and organizations for every age and sex group, the Greek community carefully integrates those members who are naturally divided by their sex and age class. Each organization is constructed around a common and central idea: the Greek culture, language, and religion must not die. It is never forgotten in any of these clubs that it is a Greek organization, composed of and for Greeks, and each club by sponsoring dances, parties, picnics, etc. for the entire group (for even at the second-generation dances the parents are present) contributes its share to the integration of the community.

One more evidence of structural unity should be mentioned—endogamy. Census statistics (the 1930 census was the last to tabulate its statistics according to nation-

ality groups) demonstrate that, of the six more powerful minority groups in Bridgetown, the Greeks have had the fewest marriages outside their group. The following table has been computed from information given in the 1930 census:

### TOTAL FOREIGN-BORN IN BRIDGETOWN FOR 1930—5,859

Italians	1,642
Polos	691
Germans	656
Irish	465
Russians	407
Greeks	159

### TOTAL NATIVES BORN OF FOREIGN OR MIXED PARENTAGE—11,583

Italians	2,459
Irish	2,329
Germans	1,858
Polos	1,154
Russians	582
Greeks	117

This data, according to the census, is "classified according to country of birth of father, except where the father is native and the mother foreign-born, and then according to the country of birth of the mother." The significance of the figures lies in this: Let us assume, for example, that of the 407 foreign-born Russians, all the women are married to Americans and all the men are likewise married to Americans. In that case the figures would show a very high number of Russians of "mixed or foreign parentage," for according to the above quoted system of classification the children of each man and woman married to an American would be classified as Russian. If, however, all the Russian foreign-born males were married to the Russian foreign-born females, the number of "native born of foreign or mixed parentage" would appear very small in the data. The facts concerning

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the Russians prove that the later hypothesis is largely true, that the Russians are relatively endogamous.

Examination of the two tables verifies what might be expected concerning the amounts of mixed marriages of the foreign nationality groups. Only 465 foreign-born Irish had 2,329 children, while 1,642 Italians had 2,459 children, 691 Poles had 1,154 children, and 159 Greeks had but 117 offspring! The startling proportional differences are not due to fertility factors (these certainly have some effect but cannot explain the great differences) but to the laxity or strength of each group's endogamy mores. Thus the English-speaking and somewhat English-acculturated Irish show the greatest amount of mixed marriages, while the Greeks with their powerful endogamy mores and a more compact, efficient community to enforce them are far at the opposite pole.

### III

Thus far I have discussed the psychological and structural unity of the community. In any such strongly unified group we should find considerable and effective pressures exerted upon those individuals who would deviate from the group mores. Relatively speaking, American society emphasizes "laissez-faire" when it comes to the behavior of its individuals. In theory at least, what a man does with his sex life is his own affair, and what he does in his business is the concern of the law. But this does not hold true even in theory for the Greeks of Bridgetown. Deviation from the group mores is liable to group pressure, formal and informal. With no laws to insure adherence to Greek standards, and with the dogged and almost self-conscious tenacity with which the Greek feels he must cling to his national customs

in the midst of an unsympathetic American culture, community action is swift and concerted.

I might cite several instances of group coercion, the first dealing with formal coercion. Several years ago a few of the boys were known to be stealing watermelons, marking up windows, and pursuing other forms of mildly delinquent behavior. The Greeks became so concerned that the President of the Community went to the parents and warned them "to take care; we don't want a bad name for the Greeks." The action was reputedly successful. Another instance demonstrates that the community will go to any length when the reputation of the group is concerned. Here a member was actually severed from the group to insure the health of the total body, and the community even went so far as to secure the aid of the American police: "There was one young fellow who was getting into trouble with bad checks and other bad things," Mr. Salipos told me. "We went to the police and told them we didn't want him in town and they ran him out for us."

Divorce is an American practice which the Greeks find it hard to tolerate. They believe that it is an immoral blot on the community and that it indicates to Americans the disorganization and lack of co-operative success among themselves. Note here the community efforts to stem an impending divorce: "Another poor family married their daughter to a man 25 years older than she," one woman related. "On her wedding day she told me she did not love him but was marrying him so she could have her own home. After marriage he proved brutish and unreasonable in his demands on her and she decided to divorce him. First the priest went over to talk her out of it. When this didn't do any good, the ladies' club (*Philoptokos*) selected a committee

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to go over and persuade her against it. She went ahead anyway and is now happily married to another man."

Another woman commented on a recent divorce: "We don't like divorce either. We rather see a couple live unhappy than divorced. Louis Xenides won't let his sister in the house because she's divorced. But we all approve that his son divorce that Greek girl. Not because she was low class. She was just no good. Americans and Greeks they both know her. We did not want to hear Americans say, 'Look, she's a Greek.'"

Probably the best example of community action that can be mentioned is that taken against the past two priests of the community. Unlike the Roman Catholics (and the Orthodox Church is quite close to Catholicism in many other respects), the Greeks do not seem to separate the office from the man. While the Catholics feel that a priest may be immoral in his conduct and yet administer the Sacraments and be a good priest (he will answer before God), the Bridgetown Greeks feel that their priest is the most important living symbol of their nationality, their community, and their name. As the chief administrator of the Church, he is the living center of the community and its most respected member; therefore it is of the utmost importance that he live up to his moral stereotype, be a kind of ideal, sinless example for the community.

Now the Greek Church adheres to the model of chastity for its clergy, but makes a curious concession. When in training for the priesthood, the novitiate may marry, but once he has taken his vows, marriage is closed to him. And, if he does marry while in the seminary, the higher ranks of the clergy are forbidden him. This ambivalent attitude causes difficulties for the young priest who in the seminary grew accustomed to the com-

pany of the opposite sex but did not chance to marry. Once he is ordained, the most rigorous moral behavior is expected of him, and since the community's conception and the priest's conception of what determines moral behavior may then be at odds, considerable friction may arise. This seems to have been the case with the past several priests in Bridgetown. Extensive data was available only on Father Petros, the priest prior to the present Father Bibbes. The priest previous to Father Petros was dismissed by a general assembly of the community because of some kind of reputed "unpriestly behavior." The following story concerning the dismissal of Father Petros is a result of piecing together the reports of several members of the community.

Father Petros was a young, unmarried, attractive, and rather excitable new priest. He smoked, drank mildly, and enjoyed singing and dancing. Popular with the Greek women from the beginning, he was invited to many homes, but soon began to be seen more with only a few families. This caused considerable controversy. Soon he began to propound what many considered "radical ideas," concerning dating, smoking, etc., for the Greek girls. There were strong objections to these views voiced by many of the women of the group. He was seen very frequently riding in the car of a young married woman of the community, and to the accusing rumors he countered that he had no other means of transportation for Church calls, business, etc. Soon further rumors were circulating.

"When the conduct became too flagrant, about twenty of the leading men of the Greek community met to discuss the matter. Three were chosen to visit the priest. He became so excited and vociferous that several women ran to the parish house with brooms, believing the representatives were beating the

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priest." (My informant was one of the three representatives.)

"Continued pressure accomplished his removal. Soon after, the women of the community drew up a petition for his reappointment and sent it to the archbishop, who vetoed it on the grounds that the men and not their wives were the representatives of the Greek community."

### IV

In this cohesive, functioning community with its power of coercion upon deviant members, there are, nevertheless, a few indications of disunity and disorganization. These disintegrating factors are minor, relative to the integrating forces, however. For most purposes the Greeks form a true community, and I discuss the disintegrating forces only for a better comprehension of the structure of the community and in an attempt to discover what the future structure may be.

First, despite the relatively endogamous character of the Greeks, there has been a significant number of mixed marriages, the majority occurring within recent years. The Greeks, of course, are strongly set against marrying anyone not of Greek descent, particularly since there are many unmarried eligibles in Bridgetown, and it is somewhat of a disgrace to a family to have one of its members marry a non-Greek. Once the deed has been done, however, the pattern seems to be a reluctant acceptance of the act, but it apparently was not always so. Said a second-generation girl in correspondence with me: "The attitude of the Greeks toward intermarried couples has changed greatly. At first (by this I mean when I first began to take an interest in social life: say about twelve years ago) they began to tolerate the intermarried. Now they accept them, but still with a slight grudge. There are still a few ignorant old

folks who think a Greek is lost when he marries other than a Greek."

The Greeks who have married non-Greeks in Bridgetown number twenty. Of the non-Greeks chosen for mates, eight were of Italian extraction, three Irish, one German, and eight "American." Of greater significance is the fact that of the twenty Greeks who married mates of other nationalities, only five were girls. This, along with other data I uncovered, suggests that community pressure is stronger and more effective on the girls of the community and/or that the endogamous ideals of the group have been more successfully "interiorized" by the female second generation, and that the male second generation has developed a certain amount of avoidance patterning concerning the Greek girls of the community. The girls, too, evidence a certain amount of frustration and dissatisfaction with the community as a result of their inability to date the Greek boys, matters I shall take up in more detail in a later discussion of the second generation.

Second, despite the many statements claiming the absence of class, I found enough evidence to conclude that a significant amount of distinction and class conflict does occur in Bridgetown. Now the existence of classes in a society does not of itself mean social disintegration and instability. India, the most class-structured society in the world may be considered well integrated and stable, for the people accept the existing class distinctions. Where the population revolts against the distinctions, or where the distinctions are too poorly defined, class may result in disorganization and disintegration of the society. There is a certain amount of this sort of class revolt among the Greeks of Bridgetown.

There is, for instance, class discrimination on the basis of the home section of Greece. Several non-Spartans remarked

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to me that the Spartans felt they were more "high class" than the other Greeks; said they (the non-Spartans) were often snubbed and seldom invited to parties. It is interesting to note that the strongest non-Spartan group, the "Andros" have their own social organization. There is also some class discrimination on the basis of economic status. There are several families (about five) in Bridgetown who comprise a generally recognized upper class. These families, all of whom are Spartan and several of whom are interrelated by marriage, are the wealthier of the community, and their names are more frequently seen as officers of the Greek clubs, as officials for social affairs, etc. Evidence concerning the existence of class was seldom obtained from the first-generation Greeks, who either from unawareness of the class situation or a reluctance to admit it, always emphasized the unity and cohesiveness of the community. From remarks of the second generation, however, I found that there are elements of clique control in the Church and organizations, some social discrimination, and a certain amount of prejudice against certain members of the community on economic grounds. One boy, while observing that "the Greeks here stick together very well," maintained also that he had seen evidences of class: "I've noticed that at the parties certain people are conspicuously absent."

Two girls described economic prejudice. Said one: "I've found considerable class distinction among the Greeks. It was more before than now. Previously if you had your own business, you were looked up to, even if it was a poor business. Salaried men were looked down upon. It's only now that salaries have become so big-paying that salaried men are not looked down on so much.

"When I was a little girl, we were not very well off financially. I wasn't invited to

many parties. Once when I was, my mother saved up enough to get me a party dress. When I got there, the girls would move off when I tried to join their groups. It happened plenty of times. My mother saw this and became angry. She went in and told the mothers that they wouldn't be able to clean our shoes if we were in Greece. Now that we have more money, we have more prestige and the girls have come around to me.

"I've seen it at dances. On a basis of class, certain ones are avoided, are not introduced, etc. A couple of men in the community are always called by their last names, not 'Mr.' or by their first names as are the other men of the community. They were never invited to parties either.

"In the girls' club, a certain clique always has and still does run the organization. If one of this clique would object to something, nobody would open her mouth. The other kids were afraid to say anything. I didn't like being stepped on so I got out.

"The trustees have always run the town. The same few families have had the final word and often without the consultation of the others. The trustees vetoed a raise in the priest's salary without consulting the community. I've also heard it remarked that 'He wasn't high class enough to run around with the priest.'

Said the other girl: "There's been plenty of class distinction in Bridgetown but not so much among the second generation. If people would come into town and didn't own their own business, they just weren't accepted. They might be invited to parties, but grudgingly. Others would come in with money and be accepted within a month. It's not on a basis of personality. I've seen it happen when the people were unknown personally. There are about four families now that aren't really in. What acceptance they

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have you can lay to their daughters who dragged them in. There's no discrimination against the kids, and once they were accepted they pulled their fathers with them."

From a middle-aged shopkeeper came an interesting account of clique control and its undesirable effects upon the community in general and the Aheppa in particular. He had been an officer in the latter organization and, because of his rigorous opposition to many of the policies, either resigned or was expelled from the organization. The "Big Clique" he refers to is the bloc of more wealthy families I have already mentioned. "The meetings are disorganized, and it is almost impossible to keep order," he said. "When I was chairman and tried to maintain order, I became a dictator in the eyes of most of them. When a member stands to speak and says something unfavorable to the views of the financial clique, either they or their cohorts will cry, 'Katsi!' or 'Kalise!—Sit down! Enough!' This sort of discouragement keeps most of the members from expressing their views. In fact, most of the men in the community just don't bother to come to the meetings. There is never even a quorum at the first meeting. On the second night they vote with or without the quorum, and since those that do come are usually the friends of the Big Clique, we never make any progress.

"The clique effectively blocks all progressive action, keeps all new members out of the ruling section. In an American organization a young boy can get ahead as soon as they see he has ability and initiative. If anything, this is discouraged in the Greek society.

"These trustees are all related by blood or through their wives. Between themselves they have plenty of quarrels, may not even be speaking, but always present a united conservative front to the Greek

community. A lot of men in this town are financially obligated to them, and since voting is done by show of hands, they are afraid to vote on anything which is not prompted by the trustees.

"This group exercises all the power in the community by their control of the Church. Mr. Xenides held office for twenty years, Mr. Coros for at least a dozen. They never step aside to let anyone else get in, but they always complain that they do all the work. If we want to change something, they always say, 'This is our property. We have worked for this.' Those are the very words they use.

"Other Greek communities hold general meetings from four to twelve times per year. We hold one meeting per year. The rest of the time the trustees decide. The trustees decided to buy a \$5,000 house for the priest, and six months after the deed was closed, presented the proposal to the community for approval. A committee was appointed to investigate prices on furnaces, etc., and bring the best bid before the general assembly. When the report was being made to the assembly, one of the trustees interrupted to say that the furnaces were already installed. Without the knowledge of the committee, he had purchased them, had his own man install them, and charged it to the Church.

"Another time the general meeting voted in favor of a naturalization committee to aid those of us who were not yet naturalized. After it was all decided upon, the trustees announced that they had decided against it. Nothing could be done. At these meetings it doesn't matter who you are, but what you are. The first thing is the financial class you're in. At a meeting the weight of an opinion depends upon who says it. It does no good to be smart. You may be the most ignorant man in the community, able only to sign your name to a check, but it's that check

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that does the talking. Only then do they take your arguments seriously.

"Next is the section you come from. The clique members are from Sparta, and this section is the proudest of Greece. They immediately ask, 'Where are you from?' If someone does something wrong, they say, 'Well, what can you expect from him? He's from so and so.' If he's from their locality, nothing is said."

All in all, there seems to be evidence for this conclusion: The Greeks, abandoning their native land where class structure was well defined and observed, have set up their own standards in Bridgetown. All the Spartans who came to the city were poor, and, in the absence of old established higher class families or a political

aristocracy of Greeks in Bridgetown, the Spartans, understandably valuing industry and economic gain in the new country, made wealth the only symbol of status. The Greeks who came to Bridgetown first are the families that made the most money, founded the Church, and are consequently respected for their upper-class position.

It must be emphasized, however, that while there is a certain amount of rebellion against this upper-class clique, there are no signs that it approaches the intensity necessary to consider it a significant factor in disintegrating the community. As one boy put it, "They may have their squabbles, but on the whole the Greeks stick together pretty well."

## MASS PRODUCTION

BIANCA BRADBURY

*How strange, Jehovah's thriftiness;  
To shape us in a common press,  
Sun-tinted brown or white or gold,  
The product of a single mold.*

*How odd the gracious Lord saw all  
As of one shape, identical,  
Two arms, one head, one heart. How queer  
To know how thin is the veneer.*

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Bianca Bradbury is the author of an earlier poem in the Winter 1946 issue of CG, "For a World Planner."

## BARANYA COUNTY TO AMERICA

EMIL LENGYEL

JOHN SZABÓ was washed ashore in America with the great tidal wave of immigration on the eve of World War I. His name in Hungary was Szabó János, John Tailor.

János was a strong, hard-working lad, and intelligent too, a farm hand on a tanya, farm, of Baranya County. While his intelligence was not in great demand, his strong hands were. No matter how hard he worked, however, he could never earn more than a bare living. He was like one of those acrobatic dancers who appear to be marching ahead while remaining always on the same spot.

Of course, his life was not entirely bare, because his was the sun that tanned his skin and the smell of the soil which he loved with a deep and abiding love. He loved the wheat fields but not in the romantic and conscious way of city people who foolishly rave about the red poppies and cornflowers which the born peasant, János, loathed with all his heart, because they destroyed the wheat. János loved the wheat fields with the affection that only a peasant can feel toward the soil, the object of the eternally unrequited love, the heartless mistress that always gives herself to the highest bidder and never to an honest János.

János never even dreamed of buying a piece of land, because he was a sensible lad and even his dreams were sensible. Only the rich had a right to have such dreams, because dreams about land belonged to people with money, and he

never saw real money, only pennies, krajcár. That is why the peasants were so sad and gay; very, very sad and very, very gay. Sad because it was all so hopeless and gay because it was all so hopeless; sad because life preyed on their minds and gay because great sadness turns into wild gaiety. Sose halunk meg! We'll never die! The peasants were gay, at baptismal and wedding feasts, and at funeral feasts, since it was a happy occasion to be born and to get married, and it was the happiest occasion of all to bury somebody, because there was one mouth less to feed and, who knows, you were happier in heaven. At such feasts the peasants drank and ate, singing and dancing; they lost their heads completely.

János was poor but not unhappy. When you are very poor, you do not care. Those who care have something to lose, and they can be really unhappy because they are afraid. But you are not afraid of falling out of the window if you are on the ground floor. But somewhere in the back of János' mind, "under the threshold of consciousness," as some city people would say, he carried some disturbing notions which did not crystallize into articulate thoughts. Even though they were no more than nebulous thoughts, they were strong as devils, and their heavy pitchforks cut into his living flesh.

To go away—that was the song of the devils. But where? Here he was at home, had his friends, the larks and dogs, the healthy cackle of the geese and the

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familiar shape of the well. The smell of the earth was his friend, too, and so was the dung. Elsewhere in Hungary there would be another Baron, no better than his own—because he knew that they never came better—and there would also be the gendarmes—worse than the local variety, because they are always worse, with their own pitchforks—sharp bayonets. Elsewhere in Hungary he would be a foreigner, and his friends, the local geese and the local dung, would be far away.

Then the tornado struck that part of Baranya County, leaving a swath of destruction in its wake. Worse than the tornado was a swarm of locusts, which transformed the countryside into a desert. Entire villages were abandoned as the peasants beat a path to the nearest port.

Ferenc Bácsi, Uncle Francis, reached West Virginia and wrote to the home folks about his glorious life in the guts of the earth. His glory was so great that he would be able to buy all of the county and the Baron would doff his hat to him. Uncle Francis was alone, and besides he wanted to show off to somebody. Also he had a good heart. So he found the usurer who lent him money to pay for János' steerage fare. He had to pay only twenty per cent for that hundred dollars, and he would have fully two years to pay it back.

Szabó János took the boat at Fiume, and on board ship he became John Szabó. After his arrival in the New World, he went directly to Ferenc Bácsi, known to his neighbors as Frank. The magnificent mansion turned out to be a hovel in a dismal coal patch of the Scott's Run section of the West Virginia coal fields. He paid twenty dollars for the hovel—an exorbitant rent for that place. But John did not see its dismal misery. It had an electric light bulb. This was miraculous America.

John, a passionate lover of the land,

never for a moment thought of settling on it. He became a miner, working underground for long hours which did not appear too long to him. Hours are long under the sun, where the slow motion of time can be gauged by the increasing shadows of the hayricks. Hours are not long in the mines, where there is no sun and the shadows are the work of the flickering wicks. Hours are not long when they add coins to one's small treasure, and when each coin means a piece of black soil, not in America, but back home in Hungary, where the soil is the mistress, the cruel and beloved wench.

John began to feel his power. After he had knocked off work on Saturday evenings he felt like a giant. Those were his hours of glory in Morgantown, the nearest city. Then he did his shopping for the week. He entered the stores and pointed at the things he wanted to buy. The storekeepers understood his mute language and they were friendly. He could afford to buy the best of meat, his favorite dish, ham. When he bought his first pair of shoes in America, he walked home on clouds. At home he would never have had such shoes. "I bet," he thought to himself, "the Baron never had shoes like these." The Baron was his standard of values.

The ritual he relished above all was reaching into his pocket and producing his purse—a bulky Hungarian one which was an ornamental and superstitious part of his Old World farm outfit. Then it was really that he felt his power. He did not like a suit of clothes he was looking over and turned it back to the storekeeper, who was better dressed than the Baron and probably had more money. The man appeared to be disappointed, although he tried not to show it. John hoped that he was disappointed, because that would have been a clear sign of his own supreme power. Then he entered an-

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other store and there he liked the suit. The storekeeper appeared to be greatly pleased and expressed his pleasure with an extra smile and a warm handshake.

Yes, John Szabó became an important person and real gentlemen began to court his favor. These gentlemen were certainly better dressed than any he had ever seen, with frank eyes and great big smiles, slapping his back in sign of their approval of him until his back hurt. They insisted on telling him that he was all right—two words which he learned early and which he accepted as if Emperor Franz Joseph had conferred the Franz Joseph Order on him. The gentlemen also told him that he was the smartest young man it was their good luck ever to have met. They lowered their voices to a confidential whisper to show that not everybody could listen in on such an important conversation. A bright young man must think of his future, they assured him frankly and confidentially. Certainly these gentlemen were his friends. He never would have thought people like them would have his interests so much at heart.

They spoke Hungarian and John thought that was wonderful. Occasionally they used English words, which he did not understand. Perhaps for that very reason it was those words that made him trust these gentlemen even more.

In a burst of confidence, lowering his voice to the softest whisper, one of them told him that it was not impossible for a bright young man of his type to rise high in the world, very, very high, indeed. But why should one not tell the truth boldly, without any fear. Yes, John Szabó could become the owner of a coal mine such as the one in which he was working. Did the Baron in Baranya County ever own a mine? It would cost him no more than a hundred dollars to be the owner. And the gentleman showed him a beautiful document such as not even

Emperor and King Franz Joseph would be able to produce. This document was embossed and it was a share of stock. "One Hundred Dollars" was written all over it, of that there could not be the least doubt. The gentleman showed the signature, too, and of that there could be no doubt either. It was a signature, all right. Then he showed the stamp, and it appeared to be extremely important. A document like that would be of no value without a stamp. John knew about these things from Baranya County. There, too, the stamp was highly important.

John finally admitted that he had no hundred dollars because he was a newcomer in this country, but he was working hard and hoped to have it one day. No need to wait that long, the gentleman encouraged him. John could surely spare ten dollars a month in preparing his future life as a very rich man. In fifteen months, all told, he would pay for his share. That would make one hundred and fifty dollars, John remarked. With the help of an avalanche of English words, the gentleman explained that the difference represented service charges, as no interest was computed. John did not understand the technical terms, but being naturally cautious he told the gentleman he could not afford to buy the mine.

This remark aroused the gentleman, and he asked John pointedly whether he considered himself a good citizen. His pleasant smile gone, he hinted darkly that anarchists were unwelcome in the United States, since they undermined organized society and did not believe in buying mine shares. Did John want to be involved with the court and the police?

"No," he answered frankly.

"Well, then," the gentleman glowered; but evidently he could keep no grudge. He invited John to have a glass of wine, and there everything was cleared up. John told him he had saved up seventy-five

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dollars. The gentleman accepted the money. He did not even insist on the rest of the payment. Producing the beautiful document with a flourish, he handed it to John. He congratulated his young friend on having become the owner of a mine and then without too much ado he bade him farewell. John soon learned that the mine was under water and that his savings were gone.

This was a bitter lesson which he shared with many others, Poles, Lithuanians, Serbians, Italians. For the first time in their lives they had money, money to spend and money to save. They had heard about the fabulous fortunes made by audacity—the boldness of the Rockefellers and Morgans. Under the hypnotic influence of a glib talker they turned the exception into the rule. They could become millionaires overnight. Had this not happened? They were also dazed by the prospect of an improved social status. They could become owners of the mines in which they worked. A shareholder is an owner, indeed, and the glib crook did not even tell a lie. He merely told one part of the truth.

John also had the good luck to be introduced to a legendary Hungarian "leader," a New York lawyer touring the Hungarian settlements, becoming acquainted with the newcomers. The immigrants burned incense at his feet. In a strange land he was the man who protected them from unnamed evils. To them his name spelled security. He was a benign gentleman, who spoke unctuously, praised his own honesty, and dropped remarks all along the way that great Judge X was his best friend. He did not want his dear Hungarians to be taken in by crooks. They should not hesitate to write to him if they ever had a brush with the law. He could "fix" everything. Some actually wrote to him, and the great man was as good as his word. No, he had not

forgotten John or Frank, he remembered them as if they had been his own brothers and, naturally, was ready to help them in their present plight. Enclosed with his letter he sent a power of attorney containing the terms of his fee. He was a great believer in justice and so he took the cases to courts, and litigation is expensive. For that he was not to blame. At any rate, his fee was never higher than twice the amount of another lawyer's fees. His fame grew in the Hungarian American community, as a public-spirited citizen. He had a winter home in the most expensive section in New York—and strangely that, too, was credited to his integrity—and a summer home in Westchester. It was a great honor to be invited into that shrine of greatness.

The dreams of returning to Hungary as a landowner—his first dreams—receded into the mists of fantasy, now that John's savings were gone. It was Kocsis Juliska, Julia Kocsis, daughter of another miner, living in another dreary hovel, who happened to be the sympathetic soul whose presence he needed. Only the outside of the Kocsis place was dreary; inside it was warm with a hospitality which only a family with a marriageable daughter could show toward an eligible young man.

Like John, the Kocsis family were from Baranya County, but recently from the Old Country. Mother Kocsis never tired of repeating that in the entire county nobody could prepare a better paprikás csirke than her Juliska, but, obviously, this was only sales talk. Every Sunday John was invited to Juliska's house and every Sunday there was a delicious paprika chicken in the pot.

John was young and Juliska was even younger. They were not bound together by formal engagement, but it was understood that they would get married in a few years. He would save up a little

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money again, but not by becoming the owner of a mine. Of that sickness he was cured.

The West Virginia mine was a hard school. Never again was he swindled as badly as on that first occasion. But how was he to know that his childhood chum for whom he underwrote the expenses of the fare to America would skip out of sight for ever? He suffered an injury in the shafts and a lawyer took the case to court. He received the award but the lawyer received most of the compensation.

Whenever he thought of the lay-off, he felt fear grip his innermost being. He never felt like that at home, because there he had nothing to lose. But here he might lose Juliska; he might lose those glorious visits to the Morgantown stores, when he was the King, with money in his pockets; he might lose his peace of mind, as he would no longer be required to descend into the guts of the earth, could no longer count the imaginary coins dropping into his imaginary treasure house as he worked in the darkness hour after hour.

John could not forget his pal, Laci Kerekes, as good as any, with worse luck than most, accursed with a greater sense of justice than most and unable to keep it to himself. Why did he have to shoot his mouth off about that short weight in the shaft? Suddenly Laci found that there was no work for him, and it was no use trying to prove to the hiring bosses that he was as good a man as any, perhaps even better. They would not listen to him. If nobody listens to you, then you are good for nothing, no matter how good you are. Laci took to drinking and then he took to talking and he sounded like a drunk even when he was not drunk. In the lunatic asylum he kept on talking, telling everybody that he was as good as the best of them and that plenty of

dzabs, jobs, awaited him, because the bosses like a good man, especially if he was as good as he, Laci, the best miner in the state.

John had work most of the time and, generally, he could keep on paying his weekly visits to town, spending his money sensibly, and occasionally showing Juliska the magnificence of a cheap restaurant.

Gradually, the former Hungarian farm-hand became an American miner. He began to pick up enough English—or the language that passed for English in that neighborhood—not to be dependent upon the sign language on his weekly expeditions to town. He talked quite glibly about the coming pedá, payday, which he sometimes also called tájm, time. One of his buddies was thinking of a cséncs, change, to a fektri, factory, job where he would join the juni, union. Another damflo, damned fellow, was talking big about a dzsamp, jump to San Francisco. That bodi, body, from Makkishpot, McKeepsport, said he was working on an incsáj, engine, of the fanesz, furnace, for bigány, pig iron. He mixed his Hungarian with English words, using English terms with Hungarian endings. When he wanted to change cars, he said: "Cséncsolom a karét," and when he wanted to go upstairs he said: "Muffolok aptiszba." He was understood and he understood others speaking the same language.

America entered the First World War, and the factories needed men. He was just short of military age, so he decided to leave the mines if he could get a satisfactory job in a shop. He did not want to get stuck underground, and he was certain he could learn a new skill. A northern chemical factory was looking for hands, and the pay was satisfactory. This might be something for him. He made up his mind to try his luck at the

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new job, which beckoned from New Jersey.

János married Juliska before moving North. The wedding was wonderful, with wine and Gypsy music. Mother Kocsis was so overwhelmed with happiness that she cried all day and nothing could stop her. There was a lot of singing about wheat fields and larks, and there were tears in soot-bitten eyes.

John went ahead to explore the situation. The chemical factory was in the midst of a Hungarian settlement which looked almost like a Hungarian town. It had an all-Hungarian street, in which an inscription read *Patika*, pharmacy. It had a grocery store in which real papriká and real kandi cukor, rock candy, and lots of other Hungarian delicacies were on display. "Little Hungary" of that New Jersey city also had a *kocsma*, a Hungarian saloon, as near like the real thing as you could find anywhere on this side of the ocean.

The factory needed hands in a hurry. It was a pharmaceutical shop, and it was John's job to pour a syrup into blue bottles marching in front of him on a conveyor. On the first day his back was almost broken, on the second day he felt shooting pains all over his body and at the beginning of the second week his work was routine. The job paid more than the mine. The windows of the plant were large and he could look at the smoke of the adjacent plants and at a patch of the sky. Juliska made the trip North a month later. They made their temporary home in a boarding house, *burdos ház*.

The work was monotonous, it is true, but it did not kill his soul. He had time to think and—miracle of miracles—to plan his future, looking forward to a better life. He began to develop an ambition. Every young man is expected to have that, but not if he came from a *tanya*, farm, in Baranya County, especially if

that farm belonged to an entailed estate, which could not be sold and divided. John learned gradually to dare to raise his eyes toward the future. Ambition was an ingredient of the air he inhaled.

As he reached for the bottle, filling it with syrup, he was thinking rhythmically. He was trying to cut down on time. By doing the work this way, instead of that, he could reduce the time for a single operation by a split second. The rhythm evoked a song, and the song made him dance in his thoughts.

He was working and the thought gave him pleasure. He was making money—more than ever before—and that thought gave him pleasure. He was making money so that he could buy dresses for Juliska, silk dresses, and one of those songs he was humming was about silk dresses for one's lady love. For the composer of that music that was a dream, but for John it was not. He was making money, enough to save it. For what? For that farm in Baranya County? Now he was no longer sure of that, and Juliska was not sure either. She could have a silk dress and this was America. She was wearing a hat, and this was America. At home she went around barefoot, and that was Baranya County. At home people would have laughed if she had gone around in a hat, and that was Baranya County.

John kept on working and thinking. After every two minutes he thought for a second—he had made a penny, and that thought gave him pleasure. Every ten minutes—a nickel. What could he buy with that? Lots. Every twenty minutes—a dime. The silvery tone of the dime served as the musical accompaniment of the song. Every three hours and twenty minutes—a dollar, and that was a landmark, celebrated with a more protracted meditation on this theme. He was not particularly money-minded. But if you have been a farmhand in Baranya

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County a dollar is not merely a piece of money, it is also power, prestige, command over the universe, his own small universe, in the grocery store and in the dress store.

Then his thoughts strayed to Juliska, whom he had begun to call Julia, thoughts such as young men have about their young wives. He was also thinking of their house, but his thoughts on that subject were misty. Was that house in New Jersey or in County Baranya? As time progressed, the picture gained in clarity. The house was in New Jersey, but it was not a real house. It was a dream house, all pink silk and fluffy dreams.

His daydreams began to take the shape of practical plans. People who spoke English—not the "mixed" type—could get better jobs. They would matriculate in a school where classes were offered in English for foreigners. Their teacher was a young girl, the missionary type, who would never give up a fight. John forced his recalcitrant Hungarian tongue to accept the alien speech. That poor tongue of his had to perform all kinds of acrobatics. He thought himself a parrot at first, imitating sounds that were not his own, but he soon overcame this difficulty. Julia also came to grips with the difficulties of the new tongue. The teacher told them she was proud of them. This may have been a simple expression of courtesy, but to John and Juliska it was a medal of honor, which they accepted with inexpressible pride. Now they began to speak English at home, and to enter into conversations with non-Hungarian neighbors.

Life settled down into a small-town, industrial-plant routine. The years went by and at last the war was over. The soldiers were coming home and John looked into an uncertain future. Would he be kicked out of his job? Again he felt the grip of that unnamed horror.

War veterans had the first call on jobs. Who was he, anyway? An interloper, a miner from West Virginia—not even that, a farmhand from Hungary. He had no place in that New Jersey factory.

Should they go back to the Old Country, to hold their reunion with the native soil, to show off to the Baron, if he was still alive, to tell about the glories of America to their rural neighbors? They had saved up a few hundred dollars. They were less sure than ever that they wanted to go back. Let us wait, they said, for the news. What will life be like over there?

Life was not pleasant over there. Life is never pleasant in a defeated country, and Hungary had been defeated. Pre-war Hungary shrank to a fraction of her former size. That Baranya County farm—was it still in the Old Country? Yes, it was, but the new boundary ran not far from it. Complaints began to pour down upon the Hungarian Americans. Their Old Country had been amputated. "Hurry up and do something about it."

Nobody could "do something about it." This was a sign of the new age. The former nationalities became mistresses in their own houses. Now the tables were turned. Now the Hungarians became a minority. The land was filled with the laments of the irredentists proclaiming to the world that never would the proud Magyars resign themselves to their fate.

Hungary was an overcrowded, unhappy, restless country. The flood tide of re-emigration did not materialize. "Stay where you are," the handful of ex-Americans back again in their native land advised the others. John and Julia agreed that they would stay. Perhaps they would have stayed anyway.

John could have gone on filling bottles until some veteran replaced him. The endless procession of bottles did not dull his

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senses. One day, he took a critical look at the label and thought that it was not sufficiently distinctive or graphic. He made up his mind to do something about this. One of his friends was good at drawing. John explained the problem to him and the friend drew up a new label, which was a great improvement over the old one.

Back in Baranya County it would not have occurred to John to suggest any kind of improvement to the Baron, since it was not the business of farmhands to concern themselves with such matters. It was not the concern of the gentlemen either to concern themselves with innovations, since it seemed to be preordained that things should go on in the same way for ever and ever. Anybody wanting to change the preordained way of things was, of course, a good-for-nothing Socialist and that was the most awful thing in the world.

This was New Jersey and not the County of Baranya, and John need not hesitate to have a talk with the boss about that label. He made up his mind he would have that talk, and making up his mind was a measure of his new status as an American. He got cold feet at the last moment. Then he summoned all his courage and went to the boss. The boss was quite friendly, listened attentively, and asked John to leave the design with him. It was only then that John began to worry about what he had done. What had been the sense of his sticking out his neck? The boss may have been personally responsible for the old label and now he was offended. Had he been impudent in taking up this matter?

A few days later John was invited into the office of the boss and was told that the labels would be changed. At the same time he was told that beginning next Monday he was to be in charge of a crew as a foreman, with a corresponding boost in wages.

That night John did not go home—he floated on clouds of pink satin, the color of the house of his daydreams. That night was not dark, unlike all other nights. The sun was still ablaze, his own personal sun, and he was navigating close to it on his own private cloud. From that dazzling height he looked down upon the midgets of the earth, flashing blissful smiles to them. His mind was pleasantly blank and he merely repeated to himself: Szabó János, Szabó János, as if he were talking to the poor farm lad on the tanya of Baranya County.

He could afford to buy his dream castle on his wages: seven hundred dollars down and the balance on first and second mortgage. The rate of interest was stiff, but he did not care, as long as the dream castle was theirs. The house was situated in a street which the local Hungarians called alvég, lower end, and other citizens named Gulyás Avenue.

It was a street of detached two-family houses, nearly all of which belonged to Hungarian Americans. Down the entire length of the street two architectural styles alternated, Gothic and Byzantine. In front of each house, whether Gothic or Byzantine, there was a small plot of grass, and the houses were backed by small gardens, little more than backyards. Superficially, Gulyás Avenue looked no different from thousands of other streets in thousands of other American towns.

But in reality the difference was vast. The windowsills on Gulyás Avenue were telltale windowsills. They were alive with what Hungarians consider Hungarian flowers, geraniums and magenta petunias. In the small gardens behind the Gothic and Byzantine houses were the "Hungarian trees," acacias.

The house consisted of a six-room and a four-room apartment. The Szabós occupied the larger one, and a young Hun-

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garian couple was to rent the smaller flat. One of the first things John did after moving into the house was to go down into the cellar and then ascend to the first floor, counting all the stairs. From the first floor he ascended to the second floor, again counting all the stairs. From there he mounted to the third floor, counting the stairs. He had covered four levels. There was also an attic in the house to which access was gained on a ladder-like stair, and that was the fifth level. He added up all the stairs, his stairs, and again he whispered to himself, Szabó János, Szabó János.

Then it occurred to him to start a new game. He started counting the electric bulbs in the house. Time and again he was thrilled to find that he had overlooked some of the bulbs, and then he would start counting them all over again. Then he added up the totals on all levels and again he whispered to himself: Szabó János, Szabó János. He was thinking of his childhood days on the farm.

In due time the furniture arrived from the New York department store. It was the type of furniture you could find in millions of American houses on hundreds of thousands of American streets, in thousands of American towns—good, solid, honest, unimaginative sofas, tables, lamps, and rugs. Yet, when the Szabó house was furnished it did not look like millions of other houses on hundreds of thousands of other American streets. It had a touch of the Hungarian rural areas. Julia displayed her dowry of Kalotaszegi, embroideries, put up the fly-specked family pictures, a portrait of Lajos Kossuth with the Kossuth beard and hat and dress suit, and put up a painting of the Hungarian plains, all horizon and a lonely gémeskút, well, surrounded by cattle and cowboys. On top of drawers and cupboards she displayed all the knickknacks that were dear to her heart.

When the furniture was in place, John sank into his own capacious easy chair. How many times had he seen himself in that posture, and now here he was. It was unreal, as if he were looking at himself from the outside, as if he were a picture which he was studying. He held a newspaper but was too excited to read it. Lolling in the chair, he experimented with the best illumination. Noticing that the Kossuth picture was askew, he straightened it, and was very proud of that operation. It was his picture and this was his house. Szabó János, Szabó János.

There was another curious thing about John's relation with the house. He was a former peasant, and now he had a small plot of soil of his own. You would have expected him to start digging and planting, yet he never did. He was a foreman now in an American chemical factory and not a Hungarian peasant. On the other hand, Julia loved the smell of the soil, their own, the smell of the acacia trees and of the flowers. Every blade of grass of that plot was her personal friend. This was her own little realm and she transferred all the affection of which a peasant is capable to the house on Gulyás Avenue.

In that house Rosy, Tommy, and Charley were born. They were an American family now. Providence had been good to them. The sky was serene over New Jersey towns in the late twenties and the chimneys of the countless plants puffed contentedly. The clerks in her bank had a friendly smile for Mrs. Szabó. Their savings account increased.

One day John had a great surprise for his wife, a shiny new car in front of the house. Part of the garden was transformed into a garage, but the acacia tree was not touched. The first Sunday after this event they drove toward the distant hills they could observe from their windows. As John drove into the distance, he

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was also driving into the past. Out of the past arose the mist which gradually assumed the shape of the Baron he had known in his youth. What had happened to that Baron? What would he say if he saw Szabó János in his shining new American car? Such cars were owned only by very rich people over there.

It was a carefree world, which seemed destined to endure forever. It appeared to be the threshold of the American age and the Szabós were happy to belong to it. "Two cars in every garage" was the contemporary slogan. Security seemed to be within the reach of all the people who had no fear of work. The sky was constantly serene.

Out of that serene sky, without warning, came the rumble that heralded the end of the world Gulyás Avenue knew and liked. The end of the world of two cars in every garage, of one car in every garage, perhaps. An economic depression such as America, even the world, had never seen shook the foundations of the Szabós' universe. The nocturnal skies turned weird with the blueness of the sky, untarnished by the glow of furnaces. Work was doled out in small rations at the plant. John's wage cut had to be taken cheerfully. It was far more than the nothing that stared into millions of vacant eyes.

Then came the New Deal, which brought John Szabó within nodding distance of politics. In the past he had followed the crowd by becoming politically excited at election time. But now politics ceased to be a seasonal pastime and became part of life. Having faced the abyss, he no longer considered social security a remote problem. It was his security—his old-age pension, his unemployment insurance. The popular slogans of the day penetrated into Gulyás Avenue. He heard about "rugged individualism" and the "American system." They sounded all right and they were all right.

He himself was a product of the American system: hard work, hard life, but good life, a chance for hard-working people. And the children? . . . Many other doors will be open to them. Doors? . . . Factory doors too? In times of depression? Here was the rub.

Labor unions? He had a prejudice against them. Maybe it was a Hungarian prejudice associated with the gendarmes. The gendarmes were against the labor unions; he had been against the gendarmes and so he should be in favor of the unions. Gendarmes or no gendarmes, the unions were associated in his mind with opposition to authority, rebellion. He was a law-abiding citizen, a believer in free competition and rugged individualism. Everybody for himself, and may the best man win. But did the best man win? There were Ferenc and so many others. There was the blue sky over the Jersey town, unpolluted by factory soot—the blessed, life-giving grime. And there were the vacant faces, eyes of despair; and the children playing in the streets, happy children, fed by the schools. Happy children, not knowing, nor would they have cared if they had known, that it was the food of charity.

"My friends. . . ." the voice came across space. The President of the United States spoke. "My friends. . . ." John had almost forgotten the name of Emperor Franz Joseph, the ruler of his childhood. "My subjects. . . ." that ruler used to say, but John had never heard him. And now the President of the United States said: "My friend. . . ." It was addressed to him, and he felt the proximity of the President, the man who stood between him and privation, his real, personal friend.

Public-spirited citizens should take an interest in the fate of their country. Politics was the link between private and public fate. The Congressman of his district embodied that link. At the St.

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Stephen's Day picnic of his church the Congressman appeared in the flesh. He was late and he was in a hurry, because he had to help a poor widow. He went the rounds, cordially shook all the hands extended to him, looked deeply into the people's eyes and exuded that warmth of genuine human fellowship which only the best of actors can exude. Carried away, some people poured out their hearts to him, while he listened sympathetically and told them without a moment's hesitation and employing always the same labor-saving phrase that he "would see to it" in Washington. What he would see to he did not say, and that was the last people heard of him until the next election when he appealed to their votes and got them, because electors usually act on the belief that words are better than deeds.

People talked a lot about "isms" in those days, not so much on Gulyás Avenue as in big cities like New York, where people knew more about these things. But word about the "isms" reached also the Gothic and Byzantine two-family houses of Little Hungary. Bolshevism—that was something awful and John detested it thoroughly. Fascism—that was another of those foreign-sounding words which many people mouthed without knowing anything about. Mussolini—the man who made trains run on time. Did it make too much difference? At any rate, there he was. Hitler—leader of the revolt against the peace settlement, the man with the funny moustache and shrieking voice. It took some time before city people discovered the real nature of Hitlerism and then Gulyás Avenue followed suit. Socialism—there were a few old-line Socialists on the Avenue, remnants of a fighting past. Now they were living on their memories, leaderless, addicted to words.

The old-line Socialists of Gulyás Avenue detested the semi-“ism” represented

by Hungary's regent, Nicholas Horthy. "White Terror," they said, "the man responsible for the White Terror." But that detestation was not shared by many other residents of the Avenue. They had never seen him. Many had left the country long before Horthy reached the Royal Palace atop Castle Hill. They liked Horthy, whom they identified with Hungary. Horthy, the aloof ex-Admiral, who had expatriated himself from rural Hungary to maritime Austria. Horthy who spoke Hungarian with a foreign accent. He was their Horthy. Why?

Perhaps because oppressed peasants have a father complex. Strangely, that complex is often fixed on their oppressor. A powerful man, gigantic, tremendously aloof, appears in a godlike rôle. God also oppresses the poor and yet they worship him. The more He oppresses them the more they cringe at His feet. They need Him.

Or perhaps because Gulyás Avenue found it easier to visualize Hungary in one person. Horthy was not merely a person, but a symbol. And why should they venerate the country that had cast them out? Because it was the motherland. But if the mother is cruel, casting out honesty and hard work? Both God and man will forgive the children of such godless parents for turning their backs on her. Yes, but you can't do that with the mother country. The mother country is sacred, because it is a country, and a nation is sacred under our dispensation. The nation is not subject to human laws, nor to human ethics. In the veneration accorded to Admiral Horthy by the residents of the Avenue, nationalism celebrated its supreme triumph.

At home these very people would have worshiped the country only if they had been able to go to school for several years, so that "education" could exert its effect. Not many had gone to school, and on the

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tanya the nation is the detested gendarme and the equally detested petty public official, the notary, and the tax collector. At home they would not have paid homage to the state. In America it was different. Loyalty to the United States, naturally, but one could not be really loyal to the country of one's adoption without, at the same time, being loyal to the mother country. It was America that, indirectly, aroused their affection for the home country.

Gulyás Avenue was in America. Probably most of its residents were American citizens and genuinely proud of that fact. It meant many good things to live in America and to be an American citizen. They were not conscious that even in the heart of the United States they were really on the outside. They associated with their own kind. A "real American" to them was a person of English-speaking parentage: English, Scottish, Irish. That world might be opened to their children, but not to them. In America one had to belong to a nation. With only one foot were they in America, and they had to put that other foot somewhere. So they put it in Hungary.

The Szabós were baptized Catholics, the religion of the majority in Hungary. There, however, John could attend church only on rare occasions. In America the church became a part of his way of life. He liked to see the sun's rays refracted into the colors of the rainbow on the inlaid windows of the modest Hungarian church of the Jersey town. As the sun's shafts sought out the statue of a saint, his eyes followed it caressingly. A deep peace descended upon him; he felt secure, warmed by the fellowship of God and man. He relished the familiar chants, the full-throated sound of the organ. He enjoyed the words ground out by the priest without paying too much attention to their meaning. Hungarian words, melod-

ious to his ears, now consciously so, the tongue that fitted into the church because it was the tongue of his childhood days. Sitting by his side were his children, American-born, English-speaking. He wanted the Hungarian words associated with the words of Christ to percolate deep into those childish hearts so that the priest's sermon should not be alien to his children. So that he should not be an alien to them. The Hungarian language of the Hungarian church should be the link. On August twentieth, St. Stephen's Day, the picnic on the banks of the river was an annual event in the Szabós' lives. There was fun there, jollity, a little bit forced, perhaps, but spontaneous before the end of the day. It was good for the children to blend into the Hungarian crowd, so that they should not acquire the uppishness of the indigenous people. These picnics were good, too, because by meeting the congregation John could measure his standing in the community. The smiles were warm, and comments upon the quality of the wieners friendly. It was good to be respected. Good to have children and good to have them see that their parents were respected.

Far and wide in the community Julia Szabó was noted for her húsleves, meat soup, túros csusza, cheese noodles, not to mention her real forte, paprikás csirke. Guests said after a meal offered by her that they would like to "lick their ten fingers," the greatest compliment to a cook in Hungarian. The former best cook of Baranya had never lost that magic touch. Cooking was an art, and was the only subject on which she could wax really eloquent.

Once a year she threw a big party, *lakoma*, to which the Szabós invited fully two score guests. For weeks in advance Julia would plan the minutiae of the meal. Days before that historic event the house would be fragrant with the scent of

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baking. She acquitted herself of that gigantic task all alone, as it was a point of honor never to accept any outside help.

A stage star on her opening night could not have been more excited than Julia on the great day of the party. She never got used to the culinary first nights, no matter how many of them she had. The guests lent themselves readily to the rôle of the enchanted audience. At psychological moments, now the one and then the other broke into enraptured cries: "Julia, darling, how did you do this? And, for heaven's sake, how did you do that? Could you, please, give me your recipe for this?" Very well did they know that she no more would part with her secrets than the medieval alchemist would yield his formula for the transmutation of base metal into gold.

Julia was a fanatic for cleanliness, a trait she shared with other women of her stock. On the Hungarian farms and in the villages, the peasants may have been very poor but they were also very clean. It was their pride that no amount of adversity would make them lower their standards. Always there was a *tiszta szoba*, clean room, a sanctuary not to be spoiled, a show place and a room to entertain honored guests. Cleanliness was an escape from the oppression of misery. You had your pride.

With time, Julia had become a stately matron. Her three children and the household absorbed all her days. She liked to leave important decisions to her husband, though she had a mind of her own. Barely literate, she had good common sense—horse sense; she was able to size up people with a shrewd glance. She could read their eyes and the inflections of their voices. John had every reason to be content with life.

The Szabós would probably have had only one child if they had lived in Hun-

gary. In their section of the Old Country they had the system known as *egyke*, one little one, since the people there felt they could afford to have only one child—if any at all.

In America they could have more children. Rosy was the first-born, a pink-skinned little angel. Julia thanked heaven for its gift, even though she admitted that it would have been more regular to have a boy as the first-born. Tom was next—a perfect team, boy and girl. Then came Charley. It would have been ideal if the fourth child should have been a girl, but instead of a child, the depression came, and Charley remained the youngest.

The children gave the parents' life a different meaning. John had always been conscientious in his work—that was his nature. He had to give the best that was in him. But now he felt he would have to improve even his very best, for the sake of his children, so that they should see no want, should be proud of him, and he of them.

Years went by, and little Rose grew up to be a long-limbed, slender girl, with eyes of cornflower blue, and hair of tow. Her record at school was indifferent but, of course, the parents agreed that was understandable since the child was only a girl. The little girl became a big girl before the parents realized how such things happened. Her lips were dainty and her complexion could be no better. One day Julia discovered the trace of lipstick on those delicate lips, and the girl confessed that she had wiped off the incriminating evidence on her way home from school. That night Julia slept little. This was one of those crucial meetings with "life." To her, rouge and lipstick were still abominations which only "painted women" used in Baranya County. This was America, of course, and a different age. But countries and ages make no difference to a mother terribly afraid for her

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child. This was a tremendous problem and the following day it was discussed fully by Julia and John. He pretended to be unconcerned, playing the part of the modern parent. Julia pretended to resign herself to inexorable fate, but she never forgot.

The mother's perceptive eyes noticed one day that Rosy had something on her mind; it took some coaxing before she unburdened herself. That night there was a dance at school and Stevey was to call for her. Was it possible that their daughter should go out with a man? Of course, Stevey was just a boy, a nice boy, so what was wrong with it? John and Julia had been living in America for a long time now, much longer than they had lived in Baranya County. Yet even the lessons of a quarter of a century could not root out certain habits.

By the time the youngsters got home from the dance, it was almost eleven. The parents heard them raiding the icebox and then sitting down to what was probably a hearty meal. Then there was silence. "You must do something about it," panic-stricken Julia whispered to John. What was he to do? The boy might be kissing Rosy at that moment. In the County of Baranya people kissed only after the marriage ceremony. Were they to force Stevey to marry Rosy? His heart was broken. It was several days before they recovered from the shock. This was the hardest stress of their process of Americanization. They had to learn by personal experience that their daughter could take care of herself.

"Little" Tom was a tall, handsome boy. Strange how these American children became so leggy, John meditated. At home the children were shorter. Sports, he thought, and good food. Tom had just entered high school, had fair academic grades and was far ahead of his class in sports. He was so versatile that the coach

could not make up his mind for some time where to put him, and it was only after much thinking that he decided upon basketball. Working hard at the game, Tom soon revealed remarkable gifts. He became the star of the team in a short time.

When the inter-city cup game took place, sports writers from far and wide were to cover the great event. Tom and his team were the challengers. Surpassing his best previous performance he ran away with the show in the most dazzling way.

The editor of the local paper, carried away by laudable municipal patriotism, emblazoned Tom's name all over the front page. In the center of the page he placed the picture of the hero, Tom. The Szabós were naturally in the seventh heaven. This was their son, bearing their name, a household word in town, his glory reflecting upon the family. Szabó János, Szabó János.

The page with Tommy's picture was framed, and the young boy placed it over his bed. There was only one newspaper for him and that newspaper had only that one issue, and that issue only that one page, with the story of his victory. He became a school celebrity and his teachers overlooked the fact that his sport achievements far eclipsed his academic work.

It was shortly afterwards that Julia saw Tommy at the corner drugstore surrounded by a bevy of admirers. He pretended not to see her. The day was hot, but she shivered on her way home. Tom pretended not to hear when they spoke to him in Hungarian, found all kinds of excuses not to attend mass in the Hungarian church, found an entirely new set of friends, outside of Gulyás Avenue. Tommy had fame, and he was too young to know that it would not last. Next year another boy got the banner headline and

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the honored position on the front page of the paper for his portrait. Tom fought for recognition, thought everybody ungrateful to forget his triumph, became haggard and harassed. He would wear the scars of early fame all his life.

Charley, the "baby," was clannishly attached to his parents. He did not have to be coaxed to accompany them to the Hungarian church. He liked to play at home. His father arranged a small workshop for him in the cellar, since the boy was gadget-minded. He wanted to become an engineer, and hearing his childish plans the father's chest would swell. This was Charley, his own Charley, who would become an engineer, a great engineer, perhaps, because nothing was impossible in America. His father was a factory foreman, and Charley would become an engineer, and so the Szabós would make their way ahead in the great American world. Szabó János, Szabó János.

This is the true story of an American family of Hungarian origin in a New Jersey town, one of the hundreds of thousands of such families. The Szabós have entered the broad stream of American life, a stream as mighty as the Mississippi, rolling toward the fulfilment of its destiny in nature's own inscrutable ways.

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*This is a chapter from Emil Lengyel's Americans From Hungary, published in March by Lippincott as the second volume in the Peoples of America series. Author and educator, Mr. Lengyel came to this country in 1921. He is on the faculty of the School of Education of New York University. Among his best known books are The Danube, Turkey, Dakar: Outpost of Two Hemispheres, and Siberia.*

## PACHUCO

GENE L. COON

I FIRST met Johnny Ortega in 1938, when I was a sergeant in the Juvenile Department of the Los Angeles force. He was a handsome, sullen little Mexican kid in pegged trousers, and his face blazed with trapped defiance as he stood before my desk. Big Mike Svenson, his face flushed and sweating, stood a pace behind Johnny, his red ham of a hand clutching the kid's sharp shoulder.

"What's your trouble, lad?" I asked, twisting a letter opener in my hands.

He just glared at me, his lower lip trembling a little, his eyes shouting

hatred. After a moment I looked at Mike, questioningly.

"Him and his greasy crowd stole a doctor's car over in Boyle Heights and wrecked it, the little scum!" Mike's big paw tightened on the kid's shoulder. Johnny winced perceptibly.

"Outside with you, Mike," I told him. I didn't like his obvious hatred of the dark-haired boy. "Leave him with me."

"You watch him, Sergeant. He'd as leave stab you as look at you."

"That's enough. Outside." I jerked my thumb at the door. Svenson glared at

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the kid, turned, and then lumbered out.

I turned to Johnny. "Now, take it easy, boy. I'm not going to hurt you." He stood in the middle of the floor, his eyes taut with belligerency. "You're in trouble, and it's my job to get you out of it if I can. Why'd you take the car?"

He stood silent. I wanted to get beneath that tough, unfriendly exterior, the put-on front that I knew was a coat of mail for a scared little boy. I knew Johnny's story already. It was a story I had heard dozens of times before. A bunch of kids of Mexican ancestry, underprivileged, shunned, bitter, and full of hate for people like Svenson. They wanted to get back at the Anglo-Saxon world that had made pariahs of them, and they did it in the way they knew best—breaking its laws. Stealing cars, breaking into neighborhood stores. Kids with an ancestral love for the beautiful and kind, who found no place for such a love in Los Angeles' East Side.

"Johnny Ortega. Do you have a brother named Castro, who runs a body and fender shop on Valley Boulevard?"

Most of his belligerent look faded. "Sure. You know Castro?"

"I went to school with him. He was one of the best ends I ever saw in high school football. He'll be sorry to hear about this."

Instantly the kid had his guard up again. "All right," he said. "I took the car. I don't have a car, so I took it. So what?"

"Johnny when you go out of here you'll be heading for a courtroom and a judge. I want to help you, but I can't unless you help me. How about it?"

"Sure. You'll help me just as that big flat-foot helps us, won't you? Push us around, beat us up, call us spic bastards. You'll help me. Go to hell, cop."

I couldn't help it. I turned the kid over to Svenson, and he drew six months in a

forestry camp. After he was released I occasionally saw him on the East Side. He hung out around a couple of pool halls with a gang. We had a sort of speaking acquaintance. I liked him, but he didn't like me. He just didn't like cops. He had a lot on the ball, though, and I knew that some day it would come out in the open.

One night I was out cruising when I got a call to head for a small liquor store on Soto Street. A burglary. As I pulled up, in the glare of my headlights I saw the large, bulky figure of Svenson holding a struggling figure against the side of the store. Somehow I knew who it was, even before I saw his white scared face and defiant eyes. Johnny. Svenson caught him as he was coming out a window. And that was all for him. He got a year and a day upstate.

When the war came, I was commissioned in the M.P.'s. I drew a few soft touches here in the states, and, after the



war was over, ended up in Germany. There was one period when we were having a lot of trouble with the black market, and we knew that some of our own troops were in on it. We started making surprise shakedown inspections of all billets in the Zone.

During one of them I was walking down the center aisle of an infantry battalion billet. The men were lined up stiffly at attention, all their belongings on their bunks. At the end of the aisle, stand-

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ing as stiffly as he had that day in my office, was Johnny Ortega. Sergeant Johnny Ortega. I looked at him in surprise. He smiled.

"Johnny! How are you?"

"Fine, sir," he replied. He said it easy. He had a different, confident ring in his voice.

The colonel spoke up. "You know Sergeant Ortega, Captain? He's one of our best men."

"I've known the sergeant for quite a few years, Colonel. How do you like the Army, Johnny?"

He looked at the colonel, then, with a glitter in his eyes, said "O.K., Captain. But I'll be glad to get home."

After I left the billet I had a long talk with the colonel about Johnny. He told me that Johnny had joined the outfit as an unfriendly, suspicious recruit. The Army, however, had a lot of people in it. People from all over the country, who had never heard of the California Pachucos who kept knives in their pockets and wore lard on their hair, and whose natural vocation was crime and violence. To them, Johnny was a nice looking guy named Ortega who liked people. Apparently Johnny's poolroom gang experience had paid off, because it developed that he had a natural capacity for leadership. In combat he was fearless, and he had been decorated three times. What had happened was obvious. The Army had accepted him at his face value as a man. There were no dingy pool halls for him to be forced into, and there were no Svensons to push him around. Little, black-haired Johnny Ortega had become a man among men.

I went back to my old job after the war, only more so. I was promoted to Detective Lieutenant, and gradually I lost contact with all my acquaintances on the East Side. I wasn't used to all the office work, but I got into the routine.

Then, one day about a year after I was separated, I was sitting at my desk going through routine reports when I saw something that made me grab my hat and run for the Central Station.

I passed through the barred inner gate and paused by the cell. There he sat upon the chain-supported bunk, holding his



head in his hands, a cigarette dangling loosely from his lips.

"Johnny," I called. "Johnny Ortega."

He looked up slowly. When he saw me, for a moment I saw the same smile upon his lips that I had seen in Germany. Then it faded and a tough, belligerent youth stood there. But he wasn't scared this time.

"Why'd you do it, Johnny?" I asked him through the bars.

He looked at me for a while, stood up, then threw his cigarette to the floor and ground it out savagely with his heel.

"O.K., cop. I'll tell you. I was doing good. Hell, I was even going to school. Aviation engineering. I guess I was only kidding myself. I thought I had a chance —aw, to hell with it. I dropped down to the poolroom last night to shoot a game with some of my old buddies. I hadn't been there since before the war. Just as I was about to leave, Svenson came in. The same old harness bull. He told me he'd get me this time. As long as I was in his neighborhood, he'd be out to get me. I was trying to leave, but then he started

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pushing me around. I got mad. I grabbed a cue and let him have it. It dropped him. Right there on the floor with the spit and the butts. They say it fractured his skull, and he's dying. Listen, cop!" He thrust his head up close to the bars, and his lip curled and his eyes flashed. He spat it out slowly and hate-filled. "I hope the bastard dies. I hope to Christ he dies!"

I couldn't say a thing. There wasn't anything for me to say. I just stood there. Johnny walked over to the bunk and threw himself down, lighting another cigarette. I turned and walked out, leaving Johnny Ortega lying in his cell, watching the tobacco smoke rising to the stained ceiling. I lit a cigarette in the cor-

ridor, but it tasted like hell. It tasted like all the evil in the world was in it. I threw it away. Outside, in the sunny street, some little Mexican kids were playing. You could hear their laughter above the heavy traffic. They didn't have a worry in the world. Not yet.

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Born in Nebraska 23 years ago, Gene L. Coon is a Californian by adoption. He spent four years in the Marines and started writing in China. While he has had magazine and newspaper articles published before, this is his first short story.

Miné Okubo is the illustrator.

## MEXICAN AMERICANS

COMMON GROUND in this issue departs from its usual practice of presenting photographs of many groups to concentrate on Mexican Americans in Southern California. Taken by Marion Palfi in the course of a nation-wide photographic survey of conditions which promote juvenile delinquency in America, the pictures constitute a striking documentation of Carey McWilliams' discussion of "The Mexican Problem" in the lead piece in this issue, and of the two stories about Mexican American youngsters—"Pachuco" by Gene Coon and "Finger-Tip Coats Are the Style" by Beatrice Griffith. Miss Palfi made her survey under a Rosenwald Fellowship and is now working on a book from her findings.

## FINGER-TIP COATS ARE THE STYLE

BEATRICE GRIFFITH

VALERIO GOMEZ, the man who is bad with my mother, came to my bed again this morning. Put his sweaty hands on my arms bare from the cover. Says I'm a Señorita already, he knows. I tell him take his hands from me. Maybe my mother likes those hands that never work, and that face that only coughs, and that reefer smell, but not me. He pulls the cover and makes a grab. Then I hit him hard. Just then my little sister runs to the door and says the woman from the settlement house comes to the door for me in the Christmas play. Then Valerio goes quick into the kitchen and out the back door.

I get up in a hurry and dress, and I talk with the settlement house lady who wants me for the angel at the Posada. I don't talk long 'cause I am scared this time. Valerio knows my father is looking for work and my mother hunting fruit at the market. Valerio may come back with meanness and really do me dirty.

There was another man my mother was bad with but he wasn't bad with me, and once gave my sister—who's married now—two little white rabbits. But every time Valerio Gomez comes to our house I'm afraid, and now he and his little girl eat here for weeks, 'cause he got no work. My father says when people are poor they have to be for each other, so when anyone is hungry they can get some beans at my father's, or what he has, so he can be for his friend who is hungry.

But what's bad is I can't tell my father Valerio comes to my bed and talks dirty,

'cause this man will tell him about my mother and then he'll hurt her and break dishes and things, and he might throw some bullets. And I can't tell my father that when he is at the rebote game or some place on Sunday and Valerio comes, well—I get kicked out of bed early and go to Mass.

There's only one person I can tell and that's Lupe. Gee, man, Lupe is smart. Some kids say she is rough, a real drape Pachuca with a finger-tip coat like I want. And sure she is. But Lupe is smart to all that goes on with boys and men. She laughs and jokes and is full of fun, only they don't touch her. She don't let 'em. Lupe is my best friend, even if my father won't let me see her if he know it. And if he knew she once smoked a stick of tea for taking a bet in the gang he'd beat me harder than he does. He's real strict, and if he sees me talking with a boy he hits me hard hard.

After the settlement house lady goes, I run out the back and into the alley that leads to the house of Lupe. I call her from over the fence, "Esá, Lupe! Esá!"

This morning she is hanging out clothes. You know she is mad the way she yells to her little brother who stands wetting the fire under the washtub. She toss her head and look with eyes that are fighting the whole world, I think.

"Qué sura, everything stinks—simon, just stinks," she tells me.

I pushed the fence back and came through into the yard.

"You know how I work in that packing

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house to make money for a new beige finger-tip coat like Henry's? Well, yesterday I bought it. Paid Burton's \$65 cash, all my money. Last night my mother saw it when she come home from the packing house, and she cried like a funeral. She says I'll get into trouble. The *jura* will stop me like they did Jennie when she was put in jail. Just 'cause she sees me in my new drape coat and short black skirt and net stockings, she goes crazy. And this morning when I get up I see my coat all cut up making a fire for boiling the wash." This she tells me while she yanks the clothes on the line that are the work clothes for her brother who's a Square.

"What's wrong with drapes, Lupe? They're the style. Anyway, who wants to dress like a Square?" I ask her this 'cause ever since the style of drape coats has been coming on she wants one. I want one myself, always.

"Nothing's wrong with drapes. It's just because of what my mother thinks. She's afraid the *jura* will get me, and my father says I'm bad already—then he beats me more. It's like I tell you. Everything stinks! My cousin Gloria's got a big stomach and took it away to get it married. Tommy's in juvenile for riding in a stolen car, him that never had a record—never. And now my new finger-tip is cut and burned up." Lupe dumped some more water into the tub on the fire and banged the bucket.

Then I tell her Valerio comes to my bed to do me dirty. "You're smart with guys, Lupe. What'll I do? If my brother comes out from forestry camp soon, it'll be okay, 'cause Roberto don't like Valerio any time. He's got pretty good boxing up there and weighs more too." I sat on the running board of their old car that hasn't got wheels or engine.

Lupe kicked the empty clothes basket and leaned her foot on the block for chopping wood and chickens' heads. Just

then Yoyo comes from the little front house to go to the toilet that sits by the back fence.

"Hórale, wisa," he calls Lupe when he goes by whistling.

"Esé, suroté, the priest to his confession, the same every morning," she call him. And he bangs the door shut that always sticks on the broken step.

"Sure Roberto's sharp," she tell me. "Always he knows how to talk when there's trouble. But he's not coming out now, not yet. He's two more months to go. You and me, we gotta be sharp." Lupe thinks some minutes. "I got it, I got it! Run away! Remember when I ran away to Pomona last year after my big beating? Simon, it's easy. Just throw a look and you get a ride."

To run away—qué suavé! I can go to my sister Chavella's house. I hugged Lupe. She tells me to meet her by the big First Street bridge tomorrow morning early. Then her grandmother yells her from the back door, and she picks up the basket, puts it on top her head, and walks slow to the house—swinging her hips like she is Dorothy Lamour in the movies.

In our house that night dinner is late. Everybody is hungry and my father is not home from hunting work. I mix lots tortillas to make something to do 'cause my mother is mad. She knows that when I came home from Lupe's today, Valerio had her. Then Valerio comes big and smart to eat with his kid in the kitchen, while he watches me mix tortillas in the bowl. He just sits there, eating and looking and smiling and eating. I told him I know what he does with my mother, and he give me a mean look and slaps me. Then I hit him with the little roller for the tortillas, hard hard. But my mother sees me through the little curtains in the door and hits me with her big hand. She gets real mad and hits me lots lots, but I don't cry in front Valerio.

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Then she hits me harder and more. But I don't cry—much.

My father comes in the front door, tired and sad from no work. He walks heavy like a drunk boss through the house. "Mañana, you work—it's always mañana you work with the gringo boss," he yell, and throw his hat on the bed. Through the door he sees my mother beating me, and so does my little brother who comes in from shining shoes downtown.

He looks at my mother hitting me—at Valerio eating beans with his little girl at our table in the kitchen, and he yells, "What's the matter? Now what's the matter?"

When my father gets mad, it is like death comes into the house with his anger. He slams his fist so hard on the table it makes the little bottle of hot peppers jump. I look at him, but he is mad and not caring that I look at him.

Then my mother puts her hands on her hips and stands in front of the stove and tell him the lie. She says I been auto riding in the park with Pinto, a Pachuco I know. And for this lie I think God will punish her.

When she tells him this, the mad of my father busts like dynamite in the house. He makes a grab for me, and I run into the bedroom, but he gets me in a corner and starts beating me with his belt, the old pistol belt he gets from the wall. He beats me hard, like I was a woman already. I try to turn away but always he hits me back to the wall. He yell I am bad already, bad—and calls me a *puta*. His belt and arm is like the wind, so swift and hard he hits. He keeps it up. He forgets to stop. Maybe he thinks he is in the foundry, 'cause he hits like the machines, up and down, up and down his arm goes. Never he beats me so long. It is getting harder to breathe on the floor. My heart is loud loud in my ears. But

suddenly he remembers I guess that he is my father—and he stops. He throws the belt hard on the trunk and walks out the door into the night.

That night sleeping on the bed that is in the living room I am awake. My body is sore and hurts with burning. I say a prayer to the Holy Virgin in the corner with the red paper roses and Holy Light, for protection for running away. The Virgin hears my prayers, each one she hears. In the dark there is music playing from the next door house, and old Jesus sits drunk on his steps singing to the stars like in Mexico when he was taming wild horses with my father. But my father is not come home yet. He is down the street getting *borracho* with Tony, who sometimes tells where there is jobs in the fruits and cement. It is always that my father beats me most when we're hungry. When poor mens not got work, they are sad and mean, I think.

I remember four years ago when my sister Chavella ran away and got married. I was ten years. She didn't know anything about love. She didn't want to get married yet, and she didn't love that guy. She just got tired of being poor at home with no clothes and no money and too much kids. Just got tired. But to marry she only gets more trouble for herself—married to Indio who peddles tea. I remember she tells me, "With a Mexican girl you get wised up when you're just a little punk. Life don't wait for you to grow up. Just when you're a little punk you get to know life—it's right there." That's what she tells me.

It was like that with Lupe. My father says Lupe is bad, that's why she got sent to that special school. But it wasn't Lupe's fault all, it was the teacher's fault some. Her teacher didn't like her when she dyed her hair red and wore it in the big big pompadour like the style. She didn't like Lupe's high socks and short skirts,

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but who is she to say what Lupe can wear? And when she cut Lupe's socks, Lupe hit her. Then she got sent to Paducah school for dumb kids. But Lupe's not dumb, not any. The only fun she has is with the Cheremoya gang mostly. They're Pachucos and stick together, man, real swell. Most all got trouble at home and know how it is to be poor, and not to have money for fun and shapey clothes and things and no work.

Pretty soon Alfredo comes in late from downtown where he shines shoes. I see him in the dark by the Holy Light. He puts his shine box in the corner by the radio, gets a cold tortilla from the kitchen, and climbs into the bed along the wall to sleep. Always Alfredo is dirty and hungry. I remember he never gets enough beans, not tonight at supper or ever. Only working in the apricots does he get his stomach full and his mouth shut.

I am in the darkness for the last night of sleep by my little sister who sleeps tight beside me, sometimes getting me wet. My heart is sad, and I wonder how it will be to sleep some place not my home, with the sounds of street car wheels banging through the wall. From the wooden porch by my window there is the scratching of fleas thumping hard on the boards and I know Reefer, my brother's dog, is awake too.

Early the next morning while everybody is asleep, I get up quiet from my bed and dress in my Pachuco skirt with my blouse from the school sewing class. I get my Sloppy-Joe sweater from behind the chair, then go easy like tissue paper across the floor and out the door.

It was foggy and cold in the early morning when I walk down that lonely working man's street. There were big

noises like the street cars and trucks, and little ones like the skinny cat running beside me along the fence, and old Tomas with a hundred years of living, pushing that squeaky baby buggy full of wood and sticks down the street. Joe's goats was loose and running, but I don't stop 'cause they only play. And when I cross to go to the bridge to meet Lupe, I see a old wino sleeping hard on the curb by the pool hall.

Lupe wasn't at the bridge. Just some cars going to work and people walking with lunch pails. But not many Mexicans going to work. Mexicans are good for digging ditches and making rails lie down for the trains, for picking the fruits, and for going hungry when there's not much work. I think Mexicans are sad for living in a brown skin maybe—that's why they're crazy sometimes. Way down, the white smoke of the trains traveling fast floats up, and for a minute there is fog around me—all white like a dream. And when the smoke is gone, there is Lupe laughing. She is cute with her black slacks and long red sweater. Her pompadour is high, man, and her gold loop earrings swing when she moves her head.

It is excitement to be walking with Lupe, so easy and laughing she is. We go through First Street where the Japanese live and there's lots business. Everybody's busy with doing something, washing sidewalks, piling boxes of vegetables from trucks on the street, and little kids running around getting yelled at. Joe Shinoda calls us. He's president at his school last year. He's smart and can jitterbug real sharp, man. He won a cup 'cause he's so good. Lupe ask him, "You still working for rich money, Joe?"

He laugh and say, "Sure, two bucks a day! I'm getting rich fast."

Then Lupe calls him, "How about a tosta for a loan, Joe?"

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"Catch it!" He spins her fifty cents, silver in the sunshine. She takes a jump and catches it like a baseball.

"Ay te watchó," she calls him.

He laughs and yells her back, "Ay te watchó."

Lupe rubs the tosta. "Qué suavé, now we can eat. And we don't have to hurry. We can go to a show if we find one of the kids maybe. Just walk on the streets and see everybody, it's fun. And you know something? You work and get a finger-tip coat and then you can go skating with the bunch of us at Lincoln Park, real swell."

And quick I said a little heart prayer to thank the Virgin—it was fun running away.

Some early morning drunks leaning in the sun hang around the corner with their dirty clothes. They give us a slow eye and some talk, but we hurry to the fat Rosita's place on Main Street for some hamburgers.

On the way Lupe throws a spit at the jail where is her father and gives him a curse. I tell her she better not give him the curse, but she say, "Ever since I remember he tells me, 'You scrub floors, you work and do women's work.' Like when we was small and we was going to the cotton fields: 'She's got to be a woman sometime, might as well now,' that's what he say. And so we get up at five o'clock in the dark to pick cotton. Always for working my life is, pick fruits, or cotton or peas, scrub work, and no help in the making of *tortillas*. And when he is drunk he says, 'You're a puta—go to Hell—I don't care!' And he don't, except to beat me like I'm a woman. *Qué sura!*'"

Inside Rosita's place was the Mexican jukebox music playing *Soldados de Levitas*, and the smell of onions, and some guys. Lupe throws a big eye to Turko, a Pachuco from Tracy, and he come over and

give her a *frajo*. And they make a lot of talk about this and that and Pachucos and girls and stuff.

It was fun to sit at the counter eating and to watch all the people on the street, some to go into the big white city hall. To see the little Mexican popcorn man in his blue wagon, and the guy that sells the Mexican papers and magazines from Mexico fixing them along the curb real nice. It was swell. To be with Lupe and run away was excitement and fun. Lupe's smart. She knows everything. The only time Lupe made a mistake was when we cut our hairs from the bottom up in front and they came in all short like a kitty's.

Turko took us for a long ride and then to my sister's high on a hill in Los Verdes. She lived in a poor house on a dirt street, but worked hard to keep it clean. Her husband, Indio, got a job at a restaurant washing dishes for some hours each day, but this morning he was home with a guy I never seen before. A guy that was dressed real smooth, Squared out—no drapes—and talks real good Spanish. It's a long time since I seen Indio. He don't come to our house much except for a favor.

Turko and Lupe don't come in 'cause they're going for a ride to Turko's uncle who raises roosters for fights, and there's a fight pretty soon. Lupe comes back, she says, after the ride—maybe.

I go out to the kitchen where Chavella is making some beans. She didn't go to work at the laundry 'cause she is sick going to have a baby. I tell her my old man beat me and Valerio tried to do me dirty. Then I tell her can I live at her house? She's nice, my sister, but afraid of Indio 'cause he's got the meanness sometimes. While we was talking, he comes into the kitchen and sits at the table. He is smiling nice to me. Like he's my friend or somebody nice.

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He calls me, "Hi, Pachuca!" First time he calls me Pachuca, ever.

Chavella tells him, "Vicky's left home. The old man beat her and she wants to stay here. Says she'll get a working permit and help for money. She can sleep on the couch in the corner."

Then he smiles big. "Sure, she can stay here. She's getting big now and grown up. Sure—you're wised up to things now. You're not a little punk anymore, and don't have to take that stuff at home." That's what he tell me.

I'm happy, man. Gee, it was swell. I was big. All quick I was big. I tell him, "I can tell my school teacher I'm going to Arizona to live with my aunt. They'll let me out of school. And they won't know I'm here 'cause I won't get caught by the truant officer and can work and make money. One kid I know never did go to school more—ever. The school don't care so long you're gone."

My sister don't look happy, but she never did much—never since I remember.

Outside, after lunch, sitting on the little porch, you can see all downtown. The big city hall and jail—real good you see them. You're high up, and see lots other hills with poor houses and goats and dirt roads and kids on them. It's easy to tell directions from here. West is the big black gas tanks with the sun going down. South is over the next hill and into Alicia's little backyard with the white rabbits and a banana tree with a goat and American flag. East is where the sun comes up and you can't see it, 'cause there's the iron foundry in the sky. And North—North is here—where no man does you dirty and no beatings.

While I was sitting on the porch, Indio came outside with the garbage and dumped it down the hill. Then he comes and sits on the steps picking his teeth real slow from the tamale.

He called me from the railing where I was sitting. "Come over here, Vicky. Sit down."

It was swell, Indio being so good. Lots guys don't let a sister come and live with 'em. I sat down by him on the step. Then he tell me, "How old you now, Vicky? Past fifteen?"

I tell him, "Well, almost. It's one year past my confirmation."

He give me a long look and stuck the toothpick behind his ear. "You get chicken easy, Vicky?"

"Heck, no," I tell him. "Last year I climbed high on the 6th Street Bridge over the river—way high, to get a pigeon with a busted wing some boys had hit. My father gave him the name Hidalgo, and built him a little cage. He loved that pigeon a long time, but it died."

Indio laughed, "Ah, I bet you ate him."

"We did not, not even when we had not beans. We buried him dead by the onions," I tell him.

Then Indio moved closer to me. "How'd you really like to make some money—some paddy money?"

"I'm going to," I tell him. "I'm going to make money. I already told you."

"How you going to do it? Work in the walnuts or chile factory? It takes a long time to get a drape coat out of a chile factory. I got a better idea," he said.

"Sure, what? A job?" It was swell now, to sit here and talk with Indio.

"How'd you like to carry tea to Charamoya twice a week? Nothin' to it. Lots of kids do." Indio swatted a big fly on his arm while he talked, then looked hard at me.

It was some minutes before I tell him. "Well, maybe. I know some kids who did. Some friends of mine did it once, but they didn't get much money."

"Oh, so you got friends who carry it? Who are they? Anybody I know?" He

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got closer on the step and talked real quiet.

"Oh, no, they got sent up to Preston, and anyway I don't tell names. That's a secret."

Then he grabbed my arm tight. "Simon, Vicky, *simon*. You're a brave chick. And you keep your mouth shut. You're the gal what can do it."

Then I ask him what I have to do.

"It's easy. Just go across town. You can carry the tea in a little can, you know —*lata*—carry it in your hand. And all you have to do is go to this guy's house, give him the can, and that's all. You don't have a record and the *jura* won't stop you."

He took a stick out of his pocket. "Ever smoke it?"

I tell him, "No. I don't want to get the habit and dry up my brains."

"Oh, don't believe it," he said. "You don't get the habit. It's all a lie. You can cut it off any time. Don't believe it. Anyhow you don't have to smoke tea to carry it. Just carry it to Cheramoya twice a week like I say, and you get paid. Carry it in your hand. It's easy. Nothing to it."

"How much I get paid?" I ask him.

"Oh, we'll fix that. Why, one kid I know got him a whole suit—drapes and everything—in just three weeks." Indio was all excited now.

"Can I get a finger-tip soon so I can go skating maybe?" I ask him. "And not like those two kids I know who only got a little bit of money?"

"Sure, sure, Vicky. A couple of coats if you want." He took my hand and shook it. Then he whispered again before he got up to go into the house, "If you ever say a word about this, I'll beat you, and not easy like your old man—get it?"

I looked up at him and remembered last night. "Sure, I know how to keep

my mouth shut. No matter what, I never talk."

"Good—good. Tomorrow you can begin. Tomorrow morning you can go down and get your school transfer, so everything will be okay." Then he went inside.

Sitting there in the sun, I say a little prayer real quick to the Virgin 'cause the Virgin is a woman and I think she knows how it is in the heart of a girl when she's got no home, and finger-tip coats are the style in the gang.

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*This story will be part of Beatrice Griffith's book on young Mexican Americans to be published under the title of American Me by Houghton Mifflin in the summer. CG readers will remember Miss Griffith's discussion of the mixed language of these adolescents in "The Pachuco Patois" in our Summer 1947 issue. We append a glossary for this particular story:*

*Ay te watchó* Be seeing you. Hispaniolized English.

*borracho* drunk.

*Esá Hi!* Hello. Local greeting used by Pachucos and their friends.

*Esé surote Hi*, you're a louse.

*frajo* cigarette. Calo origin.

*Horale Hi!* Okay. Meet you at two o'clock —expresses agreement. Calo.

*jura* Pachuco term for police. Calo.

*lata* a tin container.

*paddy* contemptuous term used by Pachucos for Anglo-Americans.

*puta* prostitute.

*Qué suavé* How swell. Calo origin.

*Qué sura* How lousy, abominable. Pachuco expression from El Paso, Texas. *simon* local Pachuco expression meaning yes.

*tosta* 50 cents. Local for toston, 50 cents in Mexico.

*wisa* (guisa) girl friend. Local origin.

## STILL TRYING TO WIN WORLD WAR II

JOSEPH SCHIFFMAN

WILLIE SMITH is tall and spare. When he moves, he moves fast with long, quick strides. But in repose his thoughtfully pursed lips give him a calm, assured appearance. As he spoke he hunched forward, his elbows on his knees.

"I was born here in Winston-Salem, North Carolina," he told me.

"My folks helped me see things. I also met preachers who preached the right kind of gospel. They taught people how to live, not how to die. You see, the preacher stands up in church, and if you can't read you got to take his word for it. He can put any interpretation he wants on the Bible. He can tell the folk the Bible says they got to be happy the way they are. For instance, if you start on the first chapter of St. Luke and then jump to St. Mark and don't give people a full understanding, they miss a whole lot.

"But this preacher I'm telling you about wasn't that way. When he spoke, I knew I wanted something, but I didn't know what it was.

"I went up north to work in Cleveland a while, in the Goodyear plant. I met lots of Negroes up there, and I saw that they had more freedom than I had. They seemed to breathe a whole lot easier.

"Then it began to dawn on me what I wanted. It came slow, but I had it figured this way. The South is really a fine place, a nice place to live. I like lots of things down here—the eats, the climate, my folks, lots of things you don't have up north. I met my wife here too. But up there you got more freedom than we have,

and that's what we need more of. So I figured that if I was going to be happy the South has got to change some.

"That's how I figured it out, but I didn't do much about it before the war. Maybe I wasn't really convinced about the idea yet. The big chance came in the Marines. Don't get me wrong. I don't love the Marines, and I certainly don't love war, but I learned a lot there.

"General Vandergrift said Negroes wouldn't make good Marines so I joined up to show him and a lot of other people they were wrong. The Marines was fine, organized like clockwork. That's what I admire so much in the Marines.

"But some of those officers really hated to see a Negro in a Marine Corps uniform. It was the first time Negroes ever were allowed in the Marines. By the end of the war there were about 18,000 of us."

He lit a cigarette slowly.

"There were things I saw that riled me bad. I mean their general policy to Negroes. One case was real mean. It was on Guam. We had a guy in our outfit who had a wife and three kids. Well, when we were overseas his wife died. The Chaplain of our outfit—we had a white Chaplain at the time—gets the death telegram and pockets it. Just like that, he pockets it and doesn't tell this guy anything about it. He straight forgot. I think if this thing had happened to a white soldier, the Chaplain would have remembered. He would have thought the whole thing more important.

"Well, this fellow didn't learn about

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his wife's passing away till a couple of weeks later. He met another fellow from his home town on the island, and this other fellow said to him, 'I was awfully sorry to hear about your wife dying.' The poor fellow like to died. He tried to commit suicide twice, he suffered so bad.

"We all felt that this fellow's case was our case too. So a few of the fellows—I was one of them—went to see the Colonel of the outfit to get this fellow a leave so he could go home for awhile and see his babies. It took the Colonel two whole months to get leave for the fellow. All the time we were sweating it out with him. Finally he went home. That was a mean case.

"It made me think a lot. It made us all think more than we ever thought before the war. Another thing got me thinking seriously was the way the officers lived and the way we lived. We were sleeping in the mud in Guam. The officers had nice Quonset huts. And they always were telling us what to do, what to eat, what to think, everything. They should have shared some of our hardships.

"These things and Senator Bilbo running around with his big mouth free as a hound dog gave me the inspiration to come back home and work with any organization that was doing something for the Negro people. That's why we started the Marine Corps League, the second Negro group of that sort formed in the United States.

"There were other things that made me think too. You see, the Marines didn't really want Negroes in the service at all, but when Walter White and a few other leaders raised a rumpus about it, they just had to let us come in. But when they got us in, they wouldn't let us get near the right to fight. After a whole lot of hot training, they shipped us out to Guam, and just kept us out there in the sun doing nothing. There we were, a bunch

of big Marines, with wonderful training and thousands of dollars worth of equipment, and doing nothing. There was plenty of fighting not far away, but we had nothing to do on Guam except lay around.

"Then they sent a lot of men into the outfit from Mississippi and Louisiana who could hardly read and write. I think they sent these fellows into our outfit just to discredit us.

"We were very angry about this and about having nothing to do, so we started a school. We had our own informal school. The officers didn't care. They acted glad to be rid of us. I was studying searchlights, and I learned a lot about radar. We had some very intelligent men in our outfit. You should have heard some of our discussions. We talked about everything, why we were fighting the war, why there was discrimination, and a lot of other subjects. Some of the college men gave courses to the rest of us, courses like sociology, history, and math. Those fellows from Mississippi and Louisiana learned a lot, too. We all learned one thing, though, a man's not worth much if he has no learning.

"All this time there was a war going on. I used to see them bring in young white guys from the States, guys just finished with boot, raw as could be. They'd send those poor guys straight into combat on one of the islands. Then a lot of them would come back to the hospital all shot up.

"We used to go up to the hospital at Guam to visit these guys. There was no discrimination there. We could visit anyone we wanted to. I once met a white boy up there from North Carolina, from right near my home. He lay there on the bed with one leg gone, his face all white and pasty-looking. We talked a little bit about home. He seemed to enjoy it. Then suddenly, he became sick again and went

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delirious. The doctors were working on him and I just stood there listening to him go off. I stood there with my body whole and strong and he was lying there all shot up. I walked away wondering about it all. Why would they rather make cannon fodder out of their own white officers and boys when we were there ready to do anything? I still can't figure that one out. Why wouldn't they let us fight?"

His lips tightened. His deep-set eyes were almost closed in thought. Then he suddenly smiled.

"Well, when we got ready to come back home, they explained the G.I. Bill of Rights to us. And after we got back to the States, they gave us a little farewell speech. A young, white lieutenant, a nice looking fellow from Florida, got up to shoot the breeze with us for a few minutes. The guys liked him right off because he didn't give us the breeze seriously. He knew it was a lot of crap, we knew it was a lot of crap, and we got along fine. He smiled and asked, 'How many of you guys are going to re-enlist?' The guys in my outfit, we all laughed. Then he became serious. His face lost its smile and he looked straight at us. He said, 'Men, get wise. If you go back to the kind of conditions you came from, you're crazy.' Then he left the room. Everybody was quiet.

"That brought things to a boil. It made me think—what was I going to do now that I was home? I had good training in the Marines in electrical wiring, and I could have got a pretty good job at that. But in that kind of work I'd be on some job off by myself, working alone, away from people. I knew that whatever I did I needed to be near people now. In the Marines I learned that anything good comes out of being with people. Like the classes we held on Guam, the discussions, the leave we got for the

fellow whose wife died, the best things that happened to me in the Marines came out of doing things with people.

"So I took this job at Camel's as a lump maker. It pays only twenty-eight dollars a week now, and it's hard for a family of four to get along on that these days, but I'm where I belong.

"Lump making is dirty, monotonous work. Most white fellows wouldn't want to do it. I have to stick my hands in the machines a hundred times a day. White boys don't like to have their hands look like this."

He held up his hands. The fingers were bent, the nails broken and eaten down by acid.

"I have another job, too, a sort of private one. It is studying the men, talking to them and seeing how we can make the old South a better place to live in.

"I guess the biggest thing that's happened down here since I'm home was the Camel strike. It was great to see 10,000 white and Negro workers walk out together. There have been a lot of changes here since the war. A few years ago you could never have got white people to come along with Negro workers in a strike. But we have that now. We walk on different picket lines, but we're closer together.

"The people are sticking together. Recently we elected a colored Councilman in our town, a minister, Kenneth Williams. He is the first Negro to be elected to public office here since Reconstruction Days.

"It was a big job getting him elected, and the Negro vets did most of it. First, the cro Political Action Committee asked the city to redraw the voting areas so that Negroes might be able to elect a Negro. In this way, two wards were added, consisting mostly of colored people.

"Then we really got to work. Four

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hundred and fifty Negro vets campaigned for Williams. He's a vet, too. He's a very well-liked man, and is respected by white people besides. We held classes for the illiterates so they would be able to pass the voting test. On Registration Day we sent down a tremendous number of people to register. We had our representatives out that day in full force. Some were at the polling place to see that everything went all right. It did. Those who had not been able to learn reading and writing in time for registration designated other people as their agents. We had never known we could do this before until some of the boys dug up the old laws. It was a big registration, the biggest Negro and white turnout in many years.

"On Election Day we were in there pitching again. We sent cars out to pick up people for voting. One of our Negro veterans happened to see an old man working away in his garden. He asked him if he had voted yet. The man replied no, he hadn't, because it looked like rain and he had to hoe before it started. The veteran told him he could go vote. He'd be glad to work his garden for him. That's the kind of fellows we've got here now. The war changed them a lot, same as it did me.

"While we were striking, 400 of us

decided to hold a parade to win public support. We put on our uniforms—Army, Navy, Marine, Coast Guard, WAC, every kind—and lined up in the dawn. At the order 'Eyes Right!' the whole town woke up. You could hear 'Left Face!' ring from one end of town to the other. People didn't know what happened until they saw us swinging up Main Street, singing and drilling in cadence. They all liked it, white and black folk both."

The smoke from his cigarette curled up around Willie Smith's heavy-lidded eyes. He paused, drawing on his cigarette.

"A lot of white people in Winston-Salem are working with us now, more than ever before. As yet they won't come halfway to meet us, but that's all right. I'm willing to go 65 per cent to meet them if they come 35 per cent to meet me. I don't worry about equality." He smiled. "If white folk come 35 per cent today, they'll come 45 per cent and maybe 50 per cent later on, because the closer they come to us, the more they see we're all the same."

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After four years in the Army, during which he wrote occasionally for *Yank*, Joseph Schiffman is now free-lancing and working on a book on the Negro in the armed forces.

## PROGRESS REPORT

ARNOLD M. ROSE

TO DAY there are many new directions in action and research in race relations. More things have been happening in this field in the past five years than in any period since the end of the Civil War.

In the first place, Negroes and other racial minorities have been getting jobs and new kinds of jobs. The war manpower shortage and the President's Fair Employment Practice Committee (FEPC) reversed the old trend toward keeping Negroes unemployed or allowing them only the lowest paid and most menial jobs. Some of the change will not be permanent, of course, but the unions, the new skills that Negroes have learned, and the growing experience of employers and the public with Negro workers will prevent a renewal of the extremes of economic discrimination that existed in the last depression. Congress killed the President's FEPC in 1945, but six states and several cities have since adopted similar legislation, and pressure for federal legislation continues.

In the second place, the world is much more aware of America's race problem. With the end of the Hitler regime in Europe, the United States is one of the few nations left in the world, and the only major nation, in which race prejudice is very strong. During the war, many peoples, like the Italians and the French, learned first-hand that Negroes are the objects of American prejudice. Practically no other country in the world has any sympathy for America's treatment of its minority groups. Criticism of this aspect

of America now appears frequently in the newspapers of other nations. America's minority problems have become an important basis of our international relations. A few prominent Americans are realizing this. For example, when Wendell Willkie returned from his "One World" tour, he stated that this nation's "reservoir of goodwill" was based partly on our treatment of minorities, and he forthwith began to work to increase civil liberties and to reduce discrimination.

Just as the attitudes of people outside the United States are forcing a change of attitudes within this country, so a renewed interest in the Negro problem on the part of northern whites is forcing a change in the South. The South has always demanded to be left alone; it has threatened the North and West whenever the latter regions have given the slightest indications of interfering in its affairs. From 1876 until the 1930s the South was left almost completely to itself, but not much moral or physical development occurred. In the '30s, the federal government began to take an interest in the local activities of all regions; and in the '40s private citizens in the North and West became increasingly aware of the attitudes of Southerners on various issues and how these attitudes affected the whole nation. This knowledge is still spreading, and the South is just beginning to change under the impact of this knowledge.

Let me cite three recent indications. In 1944, the United States Supreme

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Court—after decades of hedging—declared that the white primary was a violation of the Fifteenth Amendment which prohibits the refusal of a ballot to anyone because of race, creed, or color. Yet South Carolina tried to get around this ruling by taking the primary election out of all state law and leaving it up to political parties. This obvious circumvention fooled no one. Circuit Court Judge J. Waties Waring, a native of Charleston, reviewed the case and declared the South Carolina plan illegal. In doing so he made a remark that deserves to go down in history: "It is about time," he said, "for South Carolina to rejoin the Union." The South is beginning to look at itself with the eyes of the North. The second instance happened even more recently. Mississippi, the most backward of backward states and the most southern in its southness, last fall sharply defeated two Negro-baiters for the position of Senator, and elected a federal judge who refused to indulge in that ancient sport. It is no accident that a majority of voters thus changed their minds: they have become more aware of what the North and the rest of the world thinks of them. The third instance reflects a long-time trend. The South has emphasized states' rights and condemned federal "interference" for over a century. The South has demanded that it be allowed to handle Negroes as it wished, even if it meant killing and re-enslaving them. The North, while it left the South alone on other matters, has openly abhorred lynching and re-enslavement. Gradually this attitude of the North has become known to the South, and while there is fulmination every time a northern newspaper condemns a southern lynching, the South is hurt in a most vulnerable spot—its reputation. The South has been reducing its lynchings and has been hiding its lynchings. Even more significant was

the outcome of a recent Gallup poll: 57 per cent of a representative cross-section of white Southerners said they were in favor of a law providing for federal intervention in lynching issues.

The whole area of legal rights, which is the most crucial one for Negroes and Japanese, has seen relatively little change in recent years. There has probably been no significant decline in beating, threatening, or physically coercing Negroes in the South, or in cheating them or destroying their property. The white police and courts and prisons are giving them no more equal treatment. Last year saw the mass killing of defenseless Negro prisoners by armed guards when the prisoners refused to walk into a snake-infested pond at the whim of a guard. The share-cropping system, with its legalized peonage, is not on the decline. The recent war saw one of the greatest invasions of the civil rights of American citizens, because they happened to have Japanese ancestry, that this country has ever seen. The only significant recent change for the better has been the employment of Negro policemen for Negro areas in southern cities and their increased employment in northern cities. Although it is yet too soon to gauge the effects of this change, it would seem that law-abiding Negroes would now be getting better protection against criminal Negroes and that there would be less unnecessary use of the pistol and club by frightened white policemen.

While there has been no major increase in the legal protection of minorities in the past few years, there is good reason to expect there will be in the future, for minorities are making greater use of the ballot. As the proportion of citizens increases among the Japanese, Chinese, Mexicans, and other minority groups which have immigrated from other countries, there will be more voters among them. Policemen and judges show

more respect for those who vote than for those who do not. The Negro has not been prevented from voting by lack of citizenship, of course, but by certain legal and illegal blocks in the South. These are being torn down rapidly. Over the past 30 years, Negroes have been migrating to the North and West where they are not prevented from voting. A great increase in Negro voting in the South occurred when the Supreme Court declared that the white primary was unconstitutional. Some southern states themselves are repealing their poll tax laws, but this serves to enfranchise the poor whites rather than the Negroes. Negroes are getting at least an elementary general education in the South, and private organizations are working to give them at least a minimum of civic education, so that the literacy requirements for voting can now restrict voting only when misapplied. Thus, the only major barriers today to Negro voting are illegal ones: violence, intimidation, misapplication of laws. While Negro voting in the South has jumped up several hundred per cent, from a very low base, in the last few years, there is still only a small proportion allowed to vote.

In the realm of the "social," using the narrow sense of that term, there has been relatively little change in the past few years. The South has not relaxed its Jim Crow systems for schools, means of transportation, recreation facilities, drinking facilities, and so on. If anything, residential segregation increased in both North and South for all minorities as the housing shortage developed. Still, there have been a few improvements in this field. The courts have repeated their stand that educational facilities must be equal for all people, even if segregated. Several southern states have seen the handwriting on the wall and are making definite efforts to create Negro colleges and universities

as good as their white ones, and some border states are opening their regular graduate schools to Negroes. There has been a much greater inclination for the North to enforce its civil rights laws, and for private groups to see that they are enforced. For example, there is the work of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), which has a record of opening restaurants, recreation facilities, and so on, to Negroes. There is a fight now on to eliminate quotas directed at minorities in private colleges in the North, and this has had a measure of success. In both North and South, Negroes secured jobs in all sorts of new industrial occupations during the war. Although still segregated in large part, they worked side by side with whites in many instances, and many of their jobs were those of equals with equal pay. For many a white man, this was a first opportunity to see and get acquainted with a Negro as an equal.

Finally, there have been changes in prejudice, that is, in the attitudes which the majority holds towards minorities, in recent years. This statement and the others which follow immediately are based on impression, since it is not possible to report objective evidence and there are no polls for cross-sections of the population. The most significant change has occurred in the attitudes of youth and children. Thousands of schools, all over the North and West, and even in parts of the South, are participating in programs to reduce prejudice. My personal experience with young people in the cities where I have looked into the matter leads me to believe that the average high-school youth of today is considerably less prejudiced than his parents. The programs of the American Council on Education, the Bureau of Intercultural Education, the National Conference of Christians and Jews, and others which I do not intend to slight, are having results.

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It is more difficult to say what is happening to adults. I strongly suspect that many are being forced to re-examine their attitudes toward colored minorities. It is true that hatred of Japanese Americans mounted startlingly in 1941 and 1942, but there is evidence that the feeling abated rapidly after 1945. In St. Louis, where I now live, about a thousand Japanese Americans have come to the city and are almost completely absorbed into the life of their communities. They do not even live near each other, although in most cases they still marry each other. On the West Coast, there are signs of guilt on the part of the whites who defrauded the Japanese Americans during the Japanese evacuation. With the warming of this nation toward the Japanese nation, under the guidance of General MacArthur, we are witnessing a second complete reversal in attitudes in less than a decade.

Unfortunately I cannot report a decline in anti-Semitism. The only studies I know suggest that Hitler's propaganda against the Jews and Hitler's henchmen in this country are still having their effect. The symbolism of the Jew is very deep in Gentile souls, and it takes more than just the spectacle of Hitler's Europe to wipe it out.

I say that the prejudiced are being forced to re-examine their attitudes even if they are not necessarily changing them. That is most evident in the case of the attitudes toward Negroes. A few years ago, one could travel in the white South and hear the solid refrain: "We have no Negro problem in the South; Negroes like their place." One does not hear that nearly so much today. Southern whites generally know that Negroes hate to be servants at low wages, that they hate to be beaten and intimidated into submission. Perhaps they knew it before, but they can no longer hide the fact of

their knowledge. In the North, as part of that awakening I mentioned before, there has developed a thirst for knowledge about Negroes. Books and articles on Negroes have multiplied, and are being bought by the not-so-educated as well as the usual non-fiction public. People are examining their prejudices, subjecting themselves to new knowledge about the minorities they are oppressing.

## II

This review of the changes occurring in the past few years should not lead us to believe that everything is going along as it should in race relations. America's treatment of minority groups has been so bad for so long that the deep roots of the problem will not be easily eliminated under the most favorable of conditions. As the old difficulties are alleviated, new ones will inevitably arise. Prediction of these new problems may suggest to us some of the new directions for action in race relations. Let us first recapitulate the old difficulties which are now being increasingly attacked: (1) discrimination in employment; (2) weak legal protection; (3) voting restrictions against Negroes in the South; (4) segregation by law or by private compact; (5) a deep-seated hatred that we weakly label "prejudice."

Discrimination in employment was becoming more and more serious for most of the colored minorities up through the 1930s. It was only suddenly, since the coming of the FEPC in 1942, that they secured jobs in number and variety. The result is that, while the average Negro probably had more skills in 1865 than did the average white Southerner, by 1940 he was pitifully lacking in skills. Most Negroes do not have training to fit them for occupations other than straight labor or service. Through the generations, they have lost traditions of skills through lack

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of use. The public schools have refused to give them training in new skills on the ground that they cannot get jobs in which to use them; the students have had no faith in learning skills since they felt they would never have a chance to put them to use. With new job opportunities opening up now, there is actually a dearth of qualified Negroes to take them. A practical step to take would be to raise and step up the entire system of vocational education for Negroes, and to create an apprenticeship system whereby they could learn on the job.

Another economic problem for Negroes is that only a tiny proportion are in business. A few months ago a book was published under the title, *The Negro in Business and Business Education*. It is an excellent book, but the title is inappropriate. It should have been *The Negro Not in Business and Without Business Education*. Negroes have never had much capital for going into business, and even when they have, they have generally avoided business in favor of the professions. This is serious, as the American economy is dominated by businessmen. An interesting experiment is now going on in Chicago, in which private individuals, both white and Negro, are lending money to a non-profit committee whose purpose is to lend money to qualified Negroes who want to start small businesses and industries. This idea should be adopted in other cities.

Other minorities have other economic problems. Consider the Chinese in this country. Chinese Americans have achieved a certain amount of immunity against discrimination by segregating themselves even in economic positions. A very large proportion own or work in laundries and restaurants. Here they have a narrow economic ladder with few chances for success by American standards. Even more serious is the fact that they have

become almost stereotyped in these occupations. Some experiments need to be made in bringing Chinese Americans out of their economic and residential ghettos. Feeling against them has relaxed considerably in this country over the past 70 years, so that this should not be too difficult.

Despite the opportunities created by the war manpower shortage and the FEPC, there still exists a great deal of discrimination against minorities in employment. One of the greatest needs still is the creation of a federal FEPC and state and local FEPC's to complement it in local industries. Another great need, for some members of the majority as well as many members of several minorities, is to set higher standards in service occupations. Not only is there low pay and long hours but the conditions of employment are debasing, and security is nil. Even from the employer's standpoint, efficiency is low. A start has been made on unionizing the occupations, but equally necessary are an extension of Social Security laws to cover them, the setting up of brief training courses, the use of modern equipment, and the creation of service businesses instead of leaving everything on an individual basis.

In the political field, changes are rapid and are being so carefully directed that it may be superfluous to suggest that efforts be increased. At the same time as barriers to voting and political office are being broken down, members of minority groups are being urged to take advantage of their hard-won opportunities. The question may be raised as to whether the newly enfranchised are capable of exercising their political rights intelligently. The answer is that they probably are just as able as members of the majority, but that is not saying much. Most Americans are politically ignorant and apathetic. They think they fulfill their

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duties as citizens simply by voting; they vote for people they know nothing about; they have too many elections and too many governments to keep adequate watch over. Simply to increase the number of ignorant voters and citizens who are not concerned with government except as it affects them directly as individuals is not going to do our democracy any good. Political education is a tremendous need for nearly every American, and perhaps especially necessary for certain minorities who have to buck stereotypes and prejudices. Political education will aid minorities in pushing back some of the barriers against them.

The major barriers to political participation today are illegal, however, and therefore must be considered in the light of the whole legal status of minorities. Protection of the law and impartial treatment by its functionaries—the police, the courts, and prison administrators—is something which is owed to every citizen, regardless of his level of education. No praise is too high for the intelligence, skill, and courage characteristic of the men who direct the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). For almost forty years, they have been seeking to gain the protection of the laws for Negroes and to change the laws in the direction of bringing them into greater harmony with the spirit of the Constitution. Considering what they had to fight and with what serious handicaps they had to make this fight, they have been extraordinarily successful. No other minority could boast of such an organization until after the NAACP was started, although the excellent offices of the American Civil Liberties Union have served people of all races and creeds. Under pressure of the loss of almost all civil rights during the war, the Japanese American Citizens League created a legal arm to secure justice in the courts. It is

small and of course does not have the rich background of experience of the NAACP, but it has the sort of courage that should lead it far. The various Jewish organizations, especially the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, have always been somewhat active in protecting the legal rights of Jews. During the war years, the American Jewish Congress created the Commission on Law and Social Action, which differs from the other Jewish agencies in that it is very forthright, highly vocal, and actively concerned with the legal rights of minorities other than the Jews. It is interesting to observe that its activities are more frequently mentioned in the major Negro newspapers than in the major white-owned newspapers.

All these organizations have considerable tasks before them. They seem to have the drive, the wisdom, and the knowledge that lead one to believe they know how to achieve their goals. They will be greatly aided by the recent report of the President's Committee on Civil Rights and by any legislation on change of administrative practice that comes out of that report. I might point out one major activity not now being carried on, however, which is a most serious need. The existing legal defense agencies do not serve individuals: they are concerned with establishing law and legal precedent. As Gunnar Myrdal strongly urges, there is need for a legal aid organization to give advice and assistance, at nominal cost, to members of minority groups. There is precedent for this in the legal aid furnished to veterans by many communities, and it is a non-partisan activity that should arouse little opposition.

Discrimination and segregation in the purely social sphere of life have weakened to different degrees for different minority groups, but in general this is the area in which all minority groups have the

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toughest going. Many a member of the majority group is willing that all people shall have job opportunities, the protection of the laws, and a vote, but he is not willing to associate with the minority in either public or private places. Rather than restrict himself from public places because he does not like to associate with Negroes, or Mexicans, or Jews, he restricts them. Thus, all non-voluntary segregation involves discrimination: there is no such thing as "separate but equal" in practically any sphere of life. There is no discrimination involved, although there is prejudice, when one man refuses to invite another to his home for dinner, but there is discrimination when one man refuses to allow a second man to invite a member of a minority to his home. The attack on social discrimination occurs on two fronts: one is demonstrating to the courts that segregation involves discrimination, and the other in creating opportunities for members of different ethnic groups to have social contacts with each other on an equal basis.

The latter is very important and is something every white man can do in relation to Negroes, every Gentile in relation to Jews, and so on. The contacts must be on a plane of equality, so that existing stereotypes are not reinforced. The more of this that occurs, the more easily will it occur, for at least three reasons. In the first place, as people get to observe each other on a plane of equality, the imaginative nonsense on which their fears and phobias are based will have less reality; they will see members of other groups for what they really are. In the second place, as people become more acquainted with each other, they will learn what the other is sensitive about and, if their intentions are good, they will avoid this accidental production of friction. It is a terrible fact

that in our culture today, the average white man—with the best intentions in the world—can hardly say one sentence to a Negro without insulting him. The Negro either insults back or withdraws in some way, and there has been no abatement of prejudice. In the third place, as the majority learns what is insulting to, and discrimination against, the minority, the more will educated, cultured, and well-to-do members of the minority come out of their shell. The white world has no conception that there is an upper-class Negro world, and many a time I have seen looks of amazement and incredulity cross the faces of white persons when I have brought them into a gathering of educated Negroes. The Negroes are themselves partly responsible for this situation, since they isolate themselves to avoid insult and discrimination. The average white man sees only the poor and uneducated Negroes, who cannot afford to withdraw into their small communities—much as they would like to. As insult and discrimination diminish, the more educated, the wealthier, the more "congenial" Negroes will come out of isolation and make further contact easier.

I cannot presume to give a prescription to cure prejudice. Not only are our theories not verified, but I suspect they are not daring enough. Race prejudice is imbedded so deeply in the roots of our culture and personalities that it can be attacked fundamentally, or even observed properly, with only the most unusual, the most fantastic, the most penetrating of psychological instruments. I made a study and summary of various theories in a pamphlet I prepared last year for the American Council on Race Relations, entitled "Studies in the Reduction of Prejudice," and I will not repeat that data here.

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### III

Thus far I have said very little about the future of research in race relations. One of the greatest needs is for theory formation and theory testing. It is obvious, of course, that the problems of race relations lie in the minds of men, and the more knowledge we have about how the human mind operates with respect to out-groups the better position we shall be in to combat prejudice and its manifestations. By theory formation I do not mean simply guessing, but rather piecing together all the bits of information we now possess to see what possible pictures they might be clues to. The theory should then be tested: certain crucial experiments set up or certain crucial information sought to determine whether the theory is not vulnerable on certain counts. Some very interesting research along these lines is now being sponsored by the Department of Scientific Research of the American Jewish Committee. One study, conducted by Marie Jahoda of that Department and by Nathan Ackerman, a practicing psychiatrist, involves analysis of case reports of patients who come to psychiatrists for help with neurotic problems. Expression of anti-Semitism crops up not infrequently among these patients, and the study involves trying to relate the anti-Semitism to the specific personality disorders. The second study is being conducted at the University of California by Else Frenkel-Brunswik and R. Nevitt Sanford. It involves differentiating anti-Semitic persons from non-anti-Semitic persons in their answers to a battery of several hundred questions. The questions which differentiate highly are then pieced together to form a composite picture of the typical anti-Semitic personality.

Another most fruitful line of research, and one that has more immediate practical value, is what is called "action re-

search." This was a term coined by the late great psychologist, Professor Kurt Lewin, out of his effort to tie scientific research to social action. This type of research is currently receiving greatest development by the Commission of Community Interrelations (ccr) of the American Jewish Congress and at the Research Center for Group Dynamics (rcgd) of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Let me describe a few of the studies being made under the leadership of Stuart Cook, Isidor Chein, and John Harding. Action research is experimental in nature: the scientist tries to determine the effect of a certain course of action under certain conditions. In one study, an anti-Semitic remark was made by an actor to another actor, the latter presumably Jewish, in the presence of a group of people. The second actor responded in different ways to the anti-Semitic remark and the audience was asked to evaluate the effectiveness of the different answers. One finding was that an answer in terms of an appeal to American values was considered more effective than an answer in terms of individual differences. In another study, groups of children of mixed races in a recreation center are being subjected to different influences by their adult group leaders. In some groups, when a Negro child does something praiseworthy, he is not only praised, but attention is called to the fact that he is a Negro. In other groups no such race labelling is done. Before-and-after attitude tests are being conducted among both types of groups. Some very usable results are coming out of these and other studies by the ccr.

Another new type of research is what I call the "possibilities and obstacles" type of research. I participated in a recent study of this type, which I shall describe to you in a general way. I regret I cannot give the identifying details. A certain organiza-

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tion has a major program in a small city in the East in an effort to reduce inter-group tension. The program involves getting people together, regardless of race or creed, to discuss problems confronting them as citizens of the United States and of their local community. Ostensibly the aim is educational, but beneath the surface of appearances the purpose is to give people a chance to know each other and to talk out their repressed feelings regarding significant problems.

The purpose of the study was not only to find out what was happening to the participants in their discussion programs and what were the consequences for the community of their participation, but also to discover the possibilities for the program and the obstacles limiting it. The characteristics of those who participated and the motives for their participation were one specific step. Others were the attitudes of the community toward the program and its participants, the reasons for non-participation, the criticisms voiced with respect to the program, the willingness of community and organizational leaders outside the program to assist in its development, and so on. This sort of study seems to me to be much more useful than the usual evaluation study which finds out nothing more than a measure of the extent to which the purpose is being achieved.

I do not mean to slight the older kinds of studies. Sometimes the survey or factual description can be most useful. So can the impressionistic analysis or the detailed investigation of narrow areas, although we have progressed beyond these stages in the field of race relations. The comparative studies are still in the forefront of types of studies which have value. One of the weaknesses of the older studies is that they had no theoretical or practical purposes. In failing to state

the bases of the selection of their problems and data, they often turned out to be collections of biases as well as facts. As social scientists learn to specify the value premises which of necessity underlie research, even the older types of studies will have great significance. It is interesting that those who are most insistent on the gathering of "objective" data and who refuse to venture into the collection of data that are more obscure, to unearth which we do not yet have adequate instruments, are also the ones who refuse to specify the value premises underlying their selection of problems, methods, and data.

But other scientists are going forward. The best theoretical and experimental studies today are being conducted by people who are not afraid to state their value premises and who avowedly want to put their findings to practical use. The scientists are now changing as fast as objective events in the field of race relations. They are studying the effects of the rapid changes in relations between groups and are seeking information which will aid in channelizing those changes in even more desirable directions. Looking at the field of race relations, there is more ground for optimism today, I believe, than in any other time within the past seventy-five years.

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Now associate professor of sociology at Washington University in St. Louis, Arnold M. Rose has just completed a condensed, simplified, and up-to-date version of *An American Dilemma*, of which he was co-author with Gunnar Myrdal. It will be published soon by Harper's under the title, *The Negro in America*. Mr. Rose's article here was originally presented as a public lecture at Roosevelt College in Chicago in December.

## LISTEN TO MY HEART

JO SINCLAIR

WHATEVER I know about the triumph of life over death was taught me by a boy whose entire life was spent in the mid-west city where he was born, a boy who was dead at twenty.

In my mind he is as alive as books; in the street where he lived and died he is as alive as the beginning warmth between the people there, as alive as the growing casualness between the Negro and white residents.

I met Jule through books. I was, at that time, working with the public library's Sloan Fund, which made possible book visits to the city's shut-ins and to the chronic ill and aged. His sister had called in the request for service; this was noted on the new card in our files, along with the information: "Jule Golden. Age, seventeen. Heart trouble, bedridden. Wants poetry and classics."

The first time I drove out to the Golden house I took Keats, Whitman, Shakespeare, and Dickens. The address was Columbia Avenue, off the Kinsman Road district, an area described recently in the newspapers as a new source of racial tension. I had not paid too much attention to the articles, but I remembered some of the facts. A number of Negroes had bought property in the neighborhood and had moved in. There was vague mention of rock throwing, of street fights between children.

The Goldens lived in the upstairs suite of a two-story house, somewhat shabby but in good condition, with a neat small lawn in front of it. The street was

full of such houses, with old spreading shade trees everywhere. The name I was looking for was printed on the strip of white paper in the mailbox slit, and I rang the bell under the box.

On the porch, the thick books in my arms, I was suddenly conscious of the heat, and then I saw a woman peering at me from one of the downstairs windows off the porch. She was staring frankly, her eyes narrowed and suspicious behind the glass.

I jerked my eyes away as the door pulled open, and then I was looking into another pair of suspicious eyes.

"How do you do," I said.

The girl had rough, red skin and very black, curly hair. She was stocky and short, a kind of apron falling straight from the shoulders giving her a squarish look. Her eyes were small and brown, almost vacant-looking despite the suspicious glance, and above them the dark thick brows met over the nose.

"Oh, you're from the library." For a moment or two the look was turned full on me; then she blurted, "Does it cost a lot?"

"Pardon me?" I said. I was aware of the dark stairs behind her, and the thick heat. It was close to five o'clock, and the street was curiously still. This was my last book visit for the day; at that moment I felt I should have waited until the next morning.

"How much is it?" she said in a low voice. "For you to come with the books?"

"Why, it's a free service," I said.

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Her eyes cleared. She turned and shouted up the stairs, "Ma, Ma! It's the library lady. Tell Juley."

Uneasily I followed her up the steps. "My brother's in the front room," she whispered. "It's so hot we moved him. He gets more air there. He's real sick."

Then I was in a living room, most of it taken up by a great double bed which had been pushed close to three windows.

Jule was propped against a pile of pillows, so that he was half sitting. He looked very long in the bed, and he was so thin his face seemed gaunt, his neck like a pipe with the swell of his Adam's apple a flaw in the fragile length of it. His nose was large and bony, and he wore glasses with dark shell rims; his black curly hair was badly in need of a cut, so that one wave of it fell over his eyes. He kept brushing this back with an automatic, nervous gesture. His hands were beautiful, too thin, but long and very white, a blue shadow close to the skin.

From the doorway where I had stopped I could see the hollow at the base of his throat and how the hollow held a sharp, leaping pulse. It was like a constantly plunging, tiny animal directly beneath the skin, and the quick beat was so sharp I could see the skin rise and recede, jump up and then retreat again. It was like a separate, tiny life.

A woman's hoarse voice said, "Please. Come in, please. I'm Mrs. Golden."

She was standing beside the open door, a tall and heavy, big-boned woman with the same skin and hair as her daughter. Hearing her, I remembered the girl's voice had had that same coarse quality.

"How do you do," I said again. "I'm Miss Adams, of the public library. Is this Jule?" I looked toward the bed, and the boy laughed.

"I'm the corpse," he said, and his voice, too, held that coarse timbre, so that I felt a little as though I were in a room

of mirrors, surrounded by a sameness of voice and hair and dark, splotched skin. Except that his eyes were different. They were quick and insolent behind the thick glass of his spectacles, with almost a sneer in them. It took me a little time to see that the insolence was nothing but the mixture of fear and regret and wistful-



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ness of which he was so full, and that the sneer was something he'd painted over the haunted look of him.

"Go to him. Go," Mrs. Golden said eagerly. "All day long he was hollering for books until I was crazy. See, there's a chair by him."

"Come on," Jule said in a taunting voice. "I'm not contagious. What did you bring?"

The girl disappeared into some other room, and I walked to the bed, put the books down on the table near him. They looked unreal there, close to the medicine bottles, the glass of water, the halves of an orange. There was a brown paper bag pinned to the edge of the mattress, and this was swelled with soiled tissues. I sat down. There was a small red notebook on the bed, near his right hand. An ever-

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sharp pencil was clipped to the pocket of his pajama top.

He seized the top book and opened it quickly. "Keats. But I've already read Keats."

"Once?" I said.

He looked up, his eyes puzzled. "Sure. Once."

"Did you like him?"

"Sure. But he's kind of old-fashioned, don't you think he is?" He talked quickly, in gusts and bursts, just as eagerly as he moved his scarecrow body and arms.

His mother had disappeared. "Well, but do you remember any one poem in particular?" I said. "You know, I've read Keats so many times, and yet each time I read a poem I see something new in it."

His eyes were steady and watchful behind the glasses. Without looking, I was aware of that terrible, constant pulse in his throat.

"I remember one," he said. "It goes, 'When I have fears that I may cease to be . . . ' It's about how a writer feels."

"Yes, I remember." I nodded. "It's fun to quote a big stretch of a poem. Or sometimes even the entire poem."

He had taken up another book, was leafing through it, and in the silence I heard Mrs. Golden's voice in the kitchen.

"Ida, go see what Becky's doing so long. I told you a hundred times not to let her go alone to the toilet."

"Aw, Ma," the girl said, "I'm sick of being a nursemaid. Honest to God."

The other voice did not change; it seemed abstracted, sunk into its own coarse, deep quality. "So go already," it said.

I heard a spoon stirring in a pot, and then another voice, a monotone that was childish and wailing. "Ma, Ma," it cried, "gimme eat."

The spoon stirred. Again the unreal voice cried out, "Ma, Ma, gimme eat."

"So give her a piece of bread," Mrs.

Golden said. "She's got to cry before you can hear her?"

"My God," Ida said without bitterness, "how can one person eat so much?"

"What other pleasures has she got?" the abstracted voice said to itself.

When I looked up from my fascinated staring at the table leg, Jule was watching me, his eyes full of a secret amusement. My face felt hot.

"Interesting," he said. "That's my sister they're feeding. She's a half-wit. Born that way. Thirty years ago. My mother won't send her to an institution, I'm glad to tell you." He grimaced, pushed back his hair. "Everybody else in the house wants her out of here. Do you want to see her?"

I murmured something, and immediately he called, "Becky. Becky, come here to Juley." His voice, for the first time, was gentle.

Becky came into the room. She looked forty-five or fifty, a short, squat woman with blurred features and hair which had been cut so close it seemed to bristle. She had her mother's skin and coloring, but her eyes were bland and darting, with no suspicion in them. Her loose, shapeless mouth was quite terrible with a smile as she lumbered close to Jule. Her eyes kept darting from his face to mine and back again.

He took one of her limp hands. "I call her my little mute," he said. "To tell you the truth, everybody else in this house is really a mute, but you can't call them that to their faces. Ever try having a conversation with mutes?"

He was smoothing her hand, and her mouth became more shapeless with delight. "Honestly, sometimes it's better to talk to her than to them. At least she doesn't think she can answer."

He pulled her closer, still in that gentle way. "Books?" he said to her.

"Books?" she said, like an echo.

"I love books," he said.

"I love books," she repeated, smiling into his face.

"I am alive," he told her.

"I am alive." That terrible echo came right back.

"I dream," he said.

"I dream," she repeated.

"Please!" I cried. "Please, don't!"

He looked at me, his eyes surprised. "But she likes to talk. I'm the only one who ever has conversations with her. Does it hurt anyone if she says beautiful words out loud?"

His gentleness disappeared as he dropped her hand. "O.K.," he said sharply. "Go to Ma. Go on. Go to Ma; she'll give you eat. Go on."

Becky went back to the kitchen. Jule picked up a book, leafed through it. "Whitman," he said, and his voice was jeering again. "He's the guy who believes in democracy, isn't he?"

I thought it was insolence then, that haunted look of fear and wistfulness.

"Do you think Whitman would like our street?"

"How do you mean?" I said.

"Why, Miss Adams," he said mockingly, "you know about this neighborhood, don't you? It's been in the papers. The same paper where I read about the Sloan Fund, and I told Ida to telephone the library." His long, thin lips drew down. "She warned me it would cost a fortune. Even after I told her it was a free service. She said everything costs money. You just can't talk to mutes. They don't listen."

The thin, bluish fingers turned pages as he peered down, and I watched the swift, shattering pulse of his heart in the hollow of his throat.

"What about the neighborhood?" I reminded him.

He closed the book on one finger, looked up at me with the jeering smile.

"There's trouble here. Something went wrong in the old melting pot. The stuff won't melt. The Jews don't want colored people to melt in with them."

His forehead wrinkled. "Streets are funny. Neighborhoods. I guess the same thing happens everywhere. In other cities, too, huh? But here, where I can watch it, it's so damn funny."

He picked up the red notebook, gestured with it. "I've got lots of it here. Poems. Poems about how a street changes."

He tossed the notebook on the table, near the orange halves. His frown deepened. "People who write poems about things they don't understand, huh?"

Then he glared at me. "Do you understand? You've got a whole library of books, so do you understand a thing like that?"

He made my heart ache. "What is it I'm to understand?" I said.

"I'll bet it happens everywhere," he said excitedly, "not only here. Maybe it has to happen. I can't blame it on this street. Who'll I blame it on?"

He drew his finger from the Whitman and began to rub one hand with the other, as if his hands were suddenly icy.

"See, this street was all white once," he said, and I saw the little heart spurt in his throat. "Jews, mostly. Then the white people started to move away, and the colored people started to move in. I don't know which happened first, white leaving or colored coming. Whose fault is it? I don't know, that's all, I just don't know."

The sharp hook of his nose quivered, as if he were smelling out something, and one hand passed through his hair, kept pushing up the shabby, childish forelock.

"Some of those white people can't move. They own houses here, or they just plain haven't got enough to move. And

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all the time the houses are losing value. Real estate, sure!"

He snorted, poked at his glasses. "Next door, in the windows, there are black faces. You go to the store, and you stand next to them. What is it? What makes you shiver? What makes you sit in the house and break your head, thinking how to get out, how to kick them out? My father! A poor, old Jew. My mother—all she used to think of was her family, but now she has to think about that. They both have to. The whole street has to. Will you tell me? You've got a whole library of books. What do the books say? I want to know. I want to know who to believe!"

I hadn't a single word to offer him. I had long overstayed my visit and I was tired, but I could not stir. And I hadn't one word to say.

A door slammed in the back of the house, and the kitchen filled with men's voices, coarse and dark as earth.

"Eat, eat!" a man shouted. "I worked like a horse, Ma. Gimme eat."

"My brother Siggy," Jule said. He was smiling sourly again.

"And money?" Mrs. Golden said. "You want eat. You worked like a horse. So where is the money?"

"Money! Some mother! You got to pay her to eat."

"You're a huckster, a business man, no?" Mrs. Golden's voice said calmly. "You got a family to support, no?"

"Listen," Siggy shouted again, "I made a few lousy bucks today, all right. I carried berries around till I was black in the face. Black, God! The whole damn neighborhood is black. I can't stand them. When they buy the berries, I can't stand to look in their faces."

"So don't look," Mrs. Golden said. "Put down that bread. You got to give me at least a dollar before you take one bite."

"Come on, Sig," said another voice.

"Give her a buck, I'm hungry. Here's my dough, Ma."

"My brother Irving," Jule said, watching me with amusement.

"Fifty cents," Siggy said. I heard the ring of a coin slapped down on the table. "No kidding, Ma, I've got a date with Rose tonight. I got to keep some of that dough."

"Let be fifty cents," the abstracted voice said. I heard the rattle of pots and dishes. "Tomorrow you'll give a whole dollar or you'll get nothing. Not one bite."

"He ain't kidding, Ma," Irving said. "Wherever you go, you see only niggers. It's getting worse."

"Don't I know?" Mrs. Golden said. "Who stands behind them in the grocery?"

"Boy, what nerve," Siggy said. "Right away they want to know all kinds of questions. How fresh are the berries, how this, how that."

His voice oiled over. "To hell with them. I charged them a dime more a quart. And they paid, too, that's how dumb they are."

I looked at Jule. He had taken one of the orange halves and was sucking at it. His eyes brooded on mine, dark and sad and suddenly without even the simulated malice.

In the kitchen, Ida said, "I was talking to Mrs. Milstein today, Ma. Do you know she's trying to sell the house?"

"To who?" Siggy's voice rapped out.

"How do I know?" Ida said. "She said she hasn't got a customer yet, but I don't believe it."

Siggy said furiously, "Do you think it's a nigger?"

Irving laughed. "If you were white, would you buy this house?"

"I'll kill her!" Siggy shouted.

"It's her house," Ida said.

Mrs. Golden's voice was musing, sad as

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Jule's eyes. "She's scared. She's so scared of the niggers she can't sleep at night. She told me yesterday when somebody comes and rings the bell she feels like she's got to faint."

Jule's voice came softly. "Mrs. Milstein owns the house. She lives downstairs."

In the kitchen, the voice said, "At least I'm not scared of them. I'm only scared of what they can do."

"What?" Siggy demanded. "What can they do?"

"Burn down a house. At night," Ida said.

"Take a white guy's job, huh?" Irving said. "Look at the way they got all the post office jobs sewed up. Civil service, sure!"

Mrs. Golden's hoarse, slow voice said, "You know what they'll do? They'll buy the Jewish Center."

"Aw, Ma," Ida cried.

"I'll kill them first," Siggy said.

"You'll see, you'll see," said Mrs. Golden. "Every day more and more Jews move out. What's the first thing a Jew takes with him? His temple. You know it, I know it. When enough move out, the temple will move, too. And when they sell the building, who will buy?"

"Nuts," Siggy said bitterly.

"When I think," Mrs. Golden said softly, "that black people will sit in our synagogue. Near where the candles used to stand, near the Star of David. When I think of such a thing, my heart stops."

Jule's sad, intent eyes were on me.

"We don't have enough money to move," he said. "There are a lot of other families the same way." The thin fingers brushed back his hair, kept brushing. "They have a solution. They say if they can't move they're going to make the colored move."

His hand stopped. "Is it true?"

"Is what true?" I said.

"That black and white people can't live in the same street?" He glared at me. "Don't you know? It ought to be in some of your books."

"It is." I felt frightened, suddenly. "Why are you so bothered about it? Your family isn't bothered. They seem to know just what to do."

"They don't." The bitter, insolent look came back to his eyes. "They're just a bunch of mutes. I'm sorry for them. That's what bothers me. They feel trapped. The trouble is, I don't think it's really a trap."

He went on slowly. "I mean, I think it's the kind of trap people make all by themselves. Like a lie. Only, with them it's not a lie. They believe it. That's even worse, isn't it? That means they're so—damn—dumb. Dumb enough to kill people for nothing. Hurt them."

He stopped for a moment and I saw him trying to think out the next words. "It makes me feel mean. Kind of blue. I mean, when I think how people act, it makes me wonder about being alive. I mean, is it good to be alive? That's what it makes me wonder. When I see my father sitting there, and all of a sudden he'll hammer on his head, like it's the end of the world. Just because colored people live next door. It doesn't make any sense to me. Do you know what I mean?"

I nodded.

"But I don't want to think it's not worth while to live," he went on slowly, and the little heart hammered away. "Even though I'm—sick. I want to know it's worth while to live. I think I'd feel better if I could figure it out," he said. "If I know, then maybe I can do something with my family."

"What do you want to know?" I asked.

"Why there's such a hollering. Such a running around. I mean, the way they run away from a different color. Why they're so afraid of black, just a color. If

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people got over being afraid like that, they wouldn't have to be afraid of anything in the world."

It began to make sense to me. "Are you afraid?" I asked.

"A little bit," he said, his eyes on the Whitman. "Not the way they are. Just a little bit. But I don't think I ought to be. If I could get over it, I'd get them over it. If—if I could get over it, I wouldn't have to be afraid of anything."

Not even of death. I stood up. "I really must go," I told him.

"When are you coming again?" he demanded, his eyes flickering. The little heart seemed to speed up. "The newspaper said you come once every two weeks. Was that a lie?"

I smiled down at him. "I'll be back very soon. With a lot of books, to answer why."

"When?" he said stubbornly.

"The day after tomorrow," I said. "Is that all right?"

His eyes steadied. He even tried to smile. "I've got lots of why's," he warned me.

"We have lots of books," I reminded him.

### II

On the next visit I brought Jule a sociology, two books by Negro poets, and a non-fiction on minorities in America.

I had hurried through the day, and it was only a little after four when I got there. I wanted to be with him for a good stretch of time. I wanted him to talk. Maybe what I really wanted was to help stave off death.

Ida let me in. "Come on upstairs," she said eagerly. "Juley thought all day you wouldn't come. He's driving me nuts."

She pushed me up the stairs ahead of her. When I walked into the big, hot

room, Jule's eyes were the room. Becky was sitting on the floor in the midst of a mass of torn newspapers, cutting one sheet slowly with a pair of scissors, but Jule was the room.

He pushed the fallen lock of hair back and I walked to the bed and sat down in the chair, put the books on the table, next to the halved orange.

"Yah," Ida cried, "I told you she'd come, you dummy."

She sat on the floor and took the scissors from Becky. "Stop making a mess," she said calmly. "Wait, I'll cut you a doll."

I looked at Jule. The little heart was lunging fast and he was paler. Beads of perspiration kept forming above his lips and on his forehead, and he would wipe them away with a piece of white tissue, then stuff the soiled paper into the bag pinned to the mattress.

He nodded, smiling. "I told them you weren't coming," he said. "I told them why the hell should a fancy librarian come to a lousy joint like this. Finally my mother couldn't stand it any more, and she beat it."

I smiled back. "But you knew I'd come."

"Oh, sure." He coughed, spat into a fresh tissue. "I just wanted to torture her. She makes me sick."

"Yah," cried Ida, scarcely looking up. "Just because she was going to the meeting. He gave her hell, he gave all of us hell. My father finally went early and said he would meet my mother there."

"I really like Mr. Whitman," Jule said calmly. "He was what you call an idealist, wasn't he?"

"A dreamer," I said. "So was Mr. Lincoln."

"Listen," Ida said, spreading her coarse grain of laughter through the room. "Ask him about the meeting, why don't you? He's so quiet all of a sudden. He doesn't

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show you that side of him. He wants you to think he's such an angel."

She cut a strip of paper savagely, her skin scarlet. Becky's eyes never moved from the scissors.

"Shut up, you half-wit," Jule said quietly. His voice was faint and clogged, as though it were coming up through layers of phlegm. He coughed into a new tissue, a wet thick sound, and I handed him the Langston Hughes and the Countee Cullen.

He took them but did not open either book.

"You see," he said to me, still quietly, "my parents went to a neighborhood meeting. Subject, how to fight the rising tide of black. My brothers are going, too, right after they finish working."

He winked at me. "I told my mother to vote for lynching. Gave her some points on methods."

Ida started to laugh, and soon, like a dull echo, Becky began to laugh. "Go on, talk," Ida said. "You know damn well we'll kick them out of here. We're stronger. There's more white people, and that's all there is to it."

"I told you to shut up, didn't I?" Jule said. The little heart was faster, the leap of it deeper. "All I wanted was for them to have colored people there, too. It's a neighborhood meeting, isn't it? All I wanted Ma to do was invite the Jacksons."

"Why should she?" Ida demanded. "It's a meeting for white people."

"For white hucksters and tailors and carpenters," Jule said. The hoarseness was coming back into his voice. "They're afraid to have a black teacher there. Or a black social worker. They're afraid they'll make monkeys out of the hucksters."

The little heart was trying to jump out of his throat. "I wonder if I could have some water," I said, getting up. "May I get myself some?"

Ida jumped up. "I'll get you some ice."

Jule's eyes were closed, his head back against the damp pillows. Becky padded behind us.

While Ida was at the icebox, Becky started to wail, "Gimme eat. Gimme eat, Ma, gimme eat."

Ida handed me the clinking glass, started to cut a thick slice off the loaf of bread on the table. Suddenly her voice was low, almost a whisper. "Miss Adams, how does Juley look to you? He had a hemorrhage yesterday. I don't want him to hear me, he gets so mad. Do you think he looks bad? It's not the first time, but yesterday was terrible. My mother is so scared."

I whispered, too. "What does the doctor say?"

"He should maybe go to a hospital. Juley doesn't want to. My mother doesn't want him to, either. She's afraid he'll—she says it's better for him near her."

"Why doesn't he want to go?" I whispered again.

"You know the way he jokes. He says he's got to stay here to protect the colored people." She wiped her hands on a dish towel. Her eyes were full of trouble, suddenly.

"He's so wonderful," she whispered. "He's not like us. My mother calls him our burning candle. Our genius. We don't know how he came into our family, honest, Miss Adams."

She hesitated. "You always see us fighting. But, honest to God, we'd do anything for him. It's like he's a teacher in the house. Just like my mother says, he's a candle that's always burning here."

I smiled at her. "Would you do me a favor?" I whispered. "It's so hot I would enjoy some ice cream. Jule would, too, I'm sure. Would you bring us a quart?"

I handed her a dollar bill and she nodded, took Becky's hand. In the living room, Jule was reading the Hughes. He

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looked up, his eyes listless. "Where you going?" he said to Ida.

"She wants ice cream," she said, dragging Becky. They clumped down the stairs.

"Sometimes I hate them," Jule said. "Ida can't even get a job. Is she dumb, afraid? I don't know."

"They love you very much," I said.

"I know." He closed the slim book on one finger. "I don't know what's the mat-

eyes would say to that. Then he nodded. "I feel like I always knew you," he said. His eyes were quiet and tired. "Like I'd been talking to you for a long time. There's nobody to talk to around here."

"Yes, I know."

"Listen," he said. "I told you about our neighbors, didn't I? Their name is Jackson. There's one son, Phillip. He's a social worker. No father. And there's Miss Jackson and their mother. Miss Jackson's a



ter with me. Sometimes I have to slap them. With words, sure. It's a wonder they hear. They don't listen to me. They don't listen to what's inside of me."

He looked up quickly, peering from behind the heavy spectacles to see what my

teacher." He took a deep breath. "She came up here last night. Miss Bascom sent her, to say hello to me."

He smiled. "Miss Bascom used to be my teacher. When I went to school. You see, I had to quit."

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I nodded.

"Miss Jackson sat where you're sitting," he said, and he started to push his hair back nervously with his free hand. "She sat here like she belonged here. I can't explain it. She talked, she listened. She looked right in my eyes. She listened, like —like she wanted to hear what I had to say. And then, when she talked, she acted like I wanted to hear what she had to say."

He looked bewildered. "She was here about ten minutes. My mother was in the kitchen. Then Sig came home. In a minute he came in here from the kitchen and told her I was too sick for a visit. She left right away."

My eyes dropped to the book in his hand, but he went on doggedly, as though I were still looking at him.

"I let her go. I didn't say one word. I wanted to crawl in front of her. Apologize, or curse, or scream. I didn't do anything."

"You didn't want a scene," I said carefully. "You didn't want to humiliate her any further."

"So I humiliated myself. After she left, I did it all. Screamed, hollered, cursed, crawled. And then I had a hemorrhage."

His eyes were very bright. "It always scares me. To have a hemorrhage. But last night, it was queer as hell; last night it didn't scare me. I even got something out of it." His voice went bitter. "The sacrificial blood, maybe, huh?"

I watched the lunge of the little heart. After a while, he sighed, opened the book.

"This is good," he muttered, his eyes jumping down the page. "I'm glad you brought it. It's like Miss Jackson. It makes me feel better."

"Which is it?"

"The one that starts, 'I, too, sing America.' Do you know that one?"

I nodded.

"Besides, they'll see how beautiful I am," he read, "'And be ashamed.' His

eyes jumped up from the page. "Only I can't shame my family. I'd have to do it some other way."

He sank back against the crumpled pillows, his eyes closed, and wiped the perspiration from his face. A small sound like a groan came from him, and he said sardonically, "Listen to my heart."

The lids jerked open and his eyes, behind the thick glasses, seemed gentle and hurt, not anything like the tone of his voice.

That was the first time he said it to me. He said it often after that, as if it were a secret we shared, but that first time the words came out in irony, in half bitterness, as though he did not trust me but had to say them anyway. Listen to my heart.

### III

My third visit was brief. The doctor was upstairs, and I gave the books to Ida at the downstairs door, lingered on the porch only because she looked so frightened.

"Juley doesn't feel good," she whispered. "Don't tell him you were here, he'll be so mad. I'll give him the books tomorrow. He looks so sick. He . . . I rub his legs, and they're so blue sometimes."

"Don't worry too much," I tried to say.

"He heard the bell," she said, her eyes on the houses across the street. "I'll have to tell him you were here." Then she whispered, "Do you know that two more colored families bought houses on our street? My mother is going crazy."

I went back to my car. Listen to my heart, listen to my heart.

On my fourth visit, Mrs. Golden came down the stairs at my ring, and looked through the starched curtain. The anxious, peering eyes stared at me hard; then they opened wider with a look of relief. The door was flung open.

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"Hello, Miss Adams," the woman cried. "Come in. Juley was talking about you all day. Come in, come in!"

Behind me, autumn was in the street and the first faded leaves were falling against the walls of the shabby houses and on the patches of lawn.

The door clicked behind me and Mrs. Golden gave me a gentle push. "So go up," she said, and as I climbed the stairs her hoarse voice nicked at me: "Did you have any trouble in the street? You didn't come for a whole week. Maybe you're afraid to come here now? I asked Juley why you don't come, but all he did was holler at me."

At the top of the stairs the door was open, and the three o'clock sunlight slashed across Jule's legs in the bed, long and thin under a fresh-looking sheet.

He smiled across the room. The glasses seemed too big and heavy for the bony face, and at once I saw the little heart.

"My dear, dumb mother," he said, "told me you were probably too scared to come back. I told her you were busy. I told her the city was full of half-dead people and you had to give each one a book."

"I was busy," I admitted.

"So sit down," Mrs. Golden said, and gave me another gentle push. "Maybe you want some coffee? A drink water? A piece of cake?"

"Give her a piece of Mrs. Jackson's cake," Jule said gaily. "Nobody eats it but Becky and me, anyway. Poison her, too."

"Juley," she cried, her voice piteous suddenly. "Stop killing me! Stop torturing me already!"

She turned to me, her hands out wistfully in a gesture she made often. "Why should she send me cake and pie? I don't want it, I don't need it. When Becky goes to the store for me, she goes next door all the time and sits there."

"She likes Mrs. Jackson," Jule said, his voice still gay. "Imagine, Becky likes a colored lady. She eats her stuff. She sits in that house and the lady talks to her and plays games with her."

"You like her, too," Mrs. Golden cried, her face reddening, one finger thrusting the words at him. "Don't think I don't know you gave Becky a letter to her. Don't think I don't know you wrote her she should come visit you."

He lay back against the pillows and smiled at her.

Mrs. Golden looked at me, and again her hands came out in that helpless, asking gesture. "Miss Adams, ask him what he wants from me. I am his mother, and he lays there and puts a knife in me. Why does he want I should have colored people in my house?"

Tears came to her eyes and rolled down the coarse, red skin. "Becky is by Mrs. Jackson right now. I saw her go in. Soon she'll start going downstairs. Ask him! Miss Adams, ask him what happened in this house. He lays there and laughs. Ask him what terrible thing happened by us."

"Ma, don't cry," he said softly. I sat in the chair and studied the books I had brought, and the new gentleness in his voice rocked at me like quiet hands.

"The house was sold," he said. "A Negro family bought it. The landlord's name is Thomas now, instead of Milstein."

"All right," his mother flashed at him, "so he is a fancy nigger, a postman! But he is black, no? He lives in the same house, he is my landlord, a black man. Is this true?"

"This is true," the gentle voice answered.

She started to plead with him then, and a new surge of tears came to her eyes. "Juley, don't make like I'm a crazy person, please! I am your mother. I want only what's good for my children. Is this so

much to ask? Juley, answer me, is this so much for a mother to ask?"

He took the top book from the pile and began to turn it and to push his fingers slowly up and down the red binding. His hands were unsteady, but his voice was still gentle.

"Ma, listen, all I want is for you to relax. You've got to realize there's no murder and robbery walking around here because they live here. You've got to realize that they're just like you and me. That's all I want."

His fingers pushed up and down. "All I want is to be able to respect my family. My mother."

Her hands dropped. The tearful eyes poked at me until I looked up. "Miss Adams," the woman said, "he should only listen to me about the Jewish Center. All right, they live in the house. They're people. But even about the Center he won't listen, he won't give in one inch."

"She thinks it'll be sold," Juley murmured.

"I think?" his mother cried. "Only I? Every Jew left here thinks the same. Why should a temple stay here? Why shouldn't it move to where Jews live?"

"Well, let it move," he said.

Again she pleaded with him. "Juley, we will be left behind by our own temple. We went there for twenty years. Your Papa, me, the boys. Even you used to go on holidays."

Her hands lifted to him. "Juley, when I think that colored people will sit in the Center. When I think how they'll take away our Star of David. Juley, Juley!"

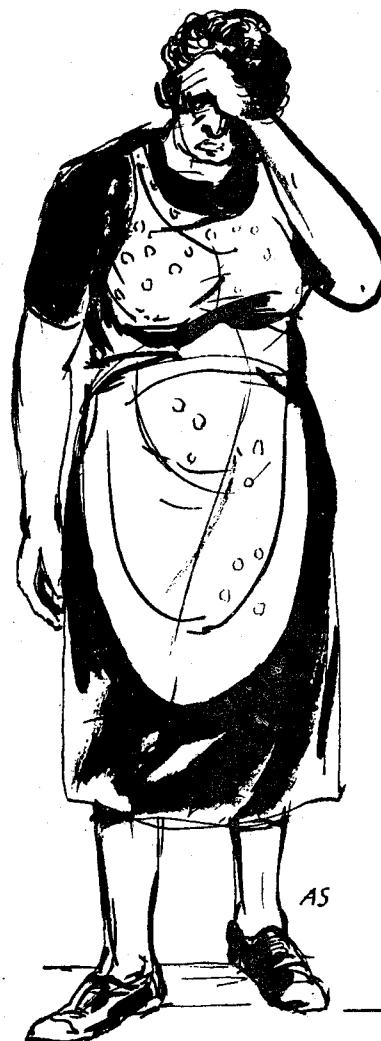
His eyes were closed and his face looked small and ghastly in the swamp of pillows. As he lay there silently, his mother took a step toward him, cried sharply, "Juley, you're all right?"

His eyes opened. They were very still, very old looking. "Ma," he said, "what kind of a God do you have, if anybody

can take Him away from you so easily?"

"What?" she said, her eyes stunned.

"Is your Star of David so little and so weak that colored people can take it



away from you just by sitting in the same room with it?"

"Juley, Juley," she whispered brokenly.

He went on inexorably, his voice as gentle, as tired. "Is that true, Ma? Is the Jewish religion such a little, weak thing that they can steal it away from you?"

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"Stop killing me," she whispered.

"I can't stop, Ma. I have to ask you. If they buy the Center and sit in it and look up to where the Star is, can they break it? Or make it dirty? Or murder it? Tell me, Ma, can they?"

"No," she whispered.

"Is the same Star in your heart?" he demanded. "Can anybody touch something in your heart? Take it away from you? Tell me, Ma," he insisted, "can they?"

"No," she whispered again, and then she turned and went slowly away, into the kitchen.

I could not look up. I listened to him cough, to the small rustle of the tissue, the wet, choked phlegm sound. "Poor old Ma," he said finally, but I kept watching the books I had brought.

"Hey, library lady," he said softly, and then I looked at him.

"I have to do it," he said. "I can't let her be that way. She could change the whole family if she wanted to. She's strong. Everybody here would do what she said was right."

"Revolution by education?" I asked, and tried to smile about it.

His eyes were too grave. He tapped the book and nodded. "Sure, I got it right out of your books. Let her change, even if it hurts her. Even if I have to put a knife in her, she has to change."

"Why?" I said. "Why are you so insistent?"

He began the nervous pushing back of his hair. The little heart rapped, and he lay there thinking, his lips apart. I saw the first downy beginnings of hair on his upper lip and along the sides of his face, and his youth suddenly crashed against me.

"I don't know," he said finally. "I can't even talk about it. I knew I had to stop hollering at my mother. At all of them. That was like guns, and it didn't

do any good. So I stopped. I began to talk. To reason."

"That sounds good."

"Yeah," he said, his forehead wrinkling. "But why? How do I know? I tried to write it down. It was hard, it took me a long time. I'm not sure why. I'm only sure I have to do it."

The little red notebook was lying on the bed, and he picked it up and opened it, handed it to me. I looked down at his large, round handwriting, like a child's.

"Read it," he said. "Go on, read it."

I read the poem he had written.

*I will no longer be afraid to die  
If I can live in mother heart,  
If I can stay in brother heart  
The way a man must be on earth.*

*I will no longer be afraid of death  
But plant my free, eternal dream  
In sister heart and mother heart.  
The tree of life, the never-dying flower.*

I kept staring at the page until he said anxiously, "Do you get it? Do you know what I mean?"

I nodded, read it again.

"I guess that's why," he said, still anxiously. "That's what I was trying to say to you."

I kept hearing: Listen to my heart. Listen to my heart.

## IV

The day came when I walked up on the porch to see the flag with two stars hung on the Golden door, between the glass and the white, starched curtain.

For almost three weeks then, my visits were short ones. I tried to see Jule two or three times a week, but Mrs. Golden's weeping hurried me from the house. Ida's clenched fists hurried me, and Becky's echoed weeping, a monotone of her mother's, the sharp and the dull sounds

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coming each time from the kitchen into Jule's room.

"She'll get over it," he said. "There are other mothers. Sig and Irv weren't the only ones drafted."

Outside the windows, the snow was falling and he watched the whiteness and the whirl. "Thanks for the books," he said. "Don't stay now, you'll just feel bad. Maybe next time she'll be all right."

And the next time, he said softly, "Thanks for the books. The novel was swell. I read parts of it to Ida."

He smiled at my look. "She said she knew it wasn't true. She said such things are impossible. Do you have any more by the same author?"

He was coughing a lot, and a new bottle of medicine stood between the red notebook and the orange. His mother's hushed weeping drifted into the room. "Becky's next door," he said. "Mrs. Jackson is lonesome. Her son wasn't drafted, he was too old, so he went and enlisted. She likes to talk to Becky. Says it isn't so lonesome that way."

Sometimes we did not have to talk at all. He would peer at the pages of an open book, and I would read the red notebook. When I looked up, the little heart was pounding in the gaunt throat. After a while, he would look up, too, and it was time for a smile.

"Don't stay now," he said for three weeks, gesturing toward the kitchen. "She'll be better next time. I talk to her a lot. Sometimes she stops crying. Come back Monday."

And then it was the right Monday, and, when I came up the stairs behind Ida, the sound of weeping was gone.

Mrs. Golden sat next to Jule's bed, her eyes eager, her hoarse voice lusty again and filled with the old impact.

"Aha," she called, "the library lady! So come in. Why are you standing by the door like a stranger?"

Becky was sitting on the floor, her legs stretched wide to make room for the big toy stuffed rabbit sitting there, facing her. She was studying the face intently, pulling at the pink ears.

Jule bowed from the bed, a smile widening his face. "Miss Adams," he said, "welcome." He was holding a fountain pen, and a pad of paper was propped against his raised legs.

"Welcome, welcome," Mrs. Golden said impatiently. "Ida, bring another chair. Sit down already, Miss Adams. Juley, you're going to stop?"

"No, Ma." Jule gestured to me and I came to the bed to put the books near him. "I'm writing a letter for my mother, Miss Adams. Do you mind?"

Mrs. Golden laughed. "Can you imagine?" she said in the old, casual way. "I never took the bother to learn English. Now I can't even write to my soldiers."

Her eyes gleamed. "So my son writes for me."

Ida nudged me. "Sit down, huh?"

She herself sat on the floor and began ducking the rabbit at Becky until the intent face broke up into laughter lines. "Boo!" Ida cried, each time the head bounced at Becky, and the woman began to giggle and to catch at the big ears.

"Well, Juley!" Mrs. Golden said, leaning her elbows on the bed.

"We're writing to Irv today," he told me. The little heart jumped and retreated. He winked at me. "Tomorrow we'll write to Sig. O.K., Ma, what else?"

"Let's see, what else?" She stared at him, her eyes narrowed. "You told how Pa has a chance to rent a little tailor shop?"

"I've got that, Ma."

"So what else should I write him?" she asked. "My head is all empty."

"How about telling him how the landlord is going to paper?"

"Good, good!" Her eyes cleared. "So

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write, Juley. Then you'll tell me what you're writing."

He wrote quickly, reading the words aloud almost as soon as he put them down. "You should see how our new landlord takes care of the house, Irving. He fixed the back steps, and now he's going to paper all the rooms."

Mrs. Golden broke in, "Write him, 'Mrs. Milstein, did she ever paper? After a fight, only!'"

Jule grinned. "O.K., Ma, I've got it. What else?"

"What else, what else?" she muttered.

"Boo!" Ida cried, and Becky giggled.

"My head is all empty," Mrs. Golden confessed. "What else, Juley?"

He bit at the end of the pen, looked at the ceiling for a moment. His face seemed soft and relaxed despite its intense pallor. His eyes, when he glanced at me, seemed happy.

"Well, look, Ma," he said, "how about Mrs. Jackson and the cake?"

She clapped one hand lightly to her head. "See, I forgot all about it! Sure, I'll tell him. Write, 'Today Mrs. Jackson came in with a birthday cake. Guess for who? For Becky! Can you imagine? Did we ever make something of Becky's birthday before now? But Mrs. Jackson, all of a sudden she wants to make something. Candles. You should've seen your sister's face when she saw the candles. Also, Mrs. Jackson brought her a present, a beautiful toy, and Becky is so happy it is wonderful to see.'"

When Jule looked up, she said, "What else should I write?"

Slowly and carefully he went on putting words into her mind. "How do you like this for a neighbor, Irving? Everybody should have such neighbors. How's that Ma?"

"Good, good," she said. "You wrote it already?"

"All done." He looked up at her, his

eyes very serious. "Why don't you write him how well she's taking Phil's death, Ma?"

She nodded thoughtfully, her eyes on the ceiling. "Write it, Juley."

"No, Ma," he said softly. "You tell me what to write."

"Boy, oh boy," Ida said from the floor, "that sure was tough."

"Tough, tough," Mrs. Golden murmured, her eyes saddening. "So write, Juley." The words came stumblingly. "Irving, I wrote you about Mrs. Jackson's boy, how he was killed, poor Mrs. Jackson. The whole street is talking about it, how he is the first from our street. You should see how good she is, how she never even cries. How she all the time asks about you and Siggy."

"O.K., Ma," Jule said, the pen poised. "I've got it."

She looked at the ceiling. I saw Jule's eyes push at her face, his jaw tight. "Any more, Ma?"

She nodded. The slow, halting voice began once more. "Irving, dear, I have to tell you something. It's like Juley said. Maybe that boy died instead of you and Siggy. He was a soldier, too. Maybe he died for you, Irving dear. For Siggy."

She nodded again, staring out the window now. There were tears in her eyes as she took up the dictation. "This is something I have to think about these days, Irving. I want you should think about it, too. Like Juley said, Mrs. Jackson's boy died for America. For us, too. Like Juley said, don't kid yourself, he died for all of us. I want you should think about this, Irving."

She sat, swaying a little, her tearful eyes staring out the window until Jule said, "Ma."

She looked at him, and he smiled. "Finished, Ma?"

She sighed, shook her head briskly. "That's enough for one letter. Write him

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love from everybody, Pa, Ida, you, me. Don't forget Becky. Love from his sister Becky."

She rose with another sigh. "Well, I got to cook supper. Ida, go mail the letter. Take Becky, it's a nice walk. Send it air mail."

When they had all gone, Jule leaned back against the pillows.

"Congratulations," I said.

His mouth twisted. "It was easy. I had lots of help. War and death."

"Out of this death," I told him, "we make the will to live."

I watched the bitterness leave his mouth. "Out of death, life," I reminded him again.

He swallowed and grabbed at my hand, turning his head away from me as he pressed my fingers. The hard clasp helped me, too, for I had begun to feel the first fear and the impending loss. I had begun to think of his death.

I think he must have sensed what I was thinking. He was very still about it, very good. After a while, his grasp loosened and he began to pat my hand softly. He kept his head turned toward the dining room but he had stopped swallowing so frantically.

I put my finger lightly on that jumping pulse in the deep hollow. It was like the pushing of a little, incredibly alive animal.

"Listen to my heart," he said quietly, his eyes still turned away. "It's always so damn full of things. Are you listening?"

"Of course," I said.

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Jo Sinclair was a frequent contributor to CG in its early years. Her novel *Wasteland* was the Harper Prize Novel for 1946.

The illustrations are by Arthur Shilstone.

## • Miscellany •

THE POLICE AND MINORITY GROUPS by Joseph D. Lohman, published by the Chicago Park District, 425 East 14th Blvd., Chicago 5, was incorrectly listed in the Winter 1948 CG as not for public distribution. It is on sale to the public for \$2 a copy.

THE PACIFIC COAST COUNCIL on Intercultural Education (Room 262, Chamber of Commerce Bldg., Los Angeles 15), in co-operation with the California State Department of Public Instruction and the seven California State Teachers Colleges, has embarked on a three-year program in pre-service teacher training to prepare teachers to deal effectively with racial and cultural problems they will encounter in their classrooms and the

communities where they will teach. In addition, the program is designed to evaluate the place of intercultural education in teacher training and to test experimentally various methods of introducing appropriate learning experiences and subject-matter into teacher-college curricula.

USEFUL BIBLIOGRAPHIES published recently include *Toward One World*, 16 pages, State Teachers College, Geneseo, New York, 25¢; *One World in School* by Louella Miles, 58 pages, American Teachers Association, Montgomery 1, Alabama, 35¢; and *Intergroup Relations Bibliography* by Henry G. Stetler, 82 pages, Connecticut Interracial Commission, State Office Bldg., Hartford, free to residents of Connecticut, 50¢ to non-residents.

## • Round-Up •

CONDUCTED BY CAREY MCWILLIAMS

### THE CIVIL RIGHTS REPORT

THE report of the President's Committee on Civil Rights, *To Secure These Rights* (Simon and Schuster. \$1), can be appraised from two points of view: first, as a piece of social engineering, that is, on the merits of its recommendations; and, second, in terms of the assumptions upon which these recommendations are based (as a socio-historical document). On the first score, about all that can or need be said is that the recommendations are excellent; much better, in fact, than might have been expected. The one weakness in the recommendations is to be found in the degree to which the committee "passed the buck" to the states on several major issues. So far as federal action is concerned, the main stumbling block has always been the Civil Rights Cases (1883) in which the Supreme Court declared the civil rights act unconstitutional, thereby opening the door to segregation by state action. When the Civil Rights Cases are read in connection with *U.S. vs. Reese* (1876), *U.S. vs. Cruikshank* (1876), and *U.S. vs. Harris* (1889), it is apparent that the Supreme Court attempted to strip the Fourteenth Amendment of practical meaning by saying, in effect, that it could not be implemented by direct legislation. While the report recognizes the existence of this impasse it does not challenge the interpretation placed by these and other decisions on the Fourteenth Amendment. The committee might well have recommended, it seems to me, the enactment of a new federal civil rights act on the assumption that the Supreme Court would today overrule its earlier decisions. But this weakness does

not detract from the excellence of the recommendations which the committee makes; it merely leaves a major issue unresolved. If the recommendations were enacted, there can be no doubt that we would have taken a long step toward the realization of that "state of universal civic freedom" which Justice Harlan once said it was the purpose of the Fourteenth Amendment to achieve.

The historic significance of the report consists in the fact that it reflects a new point of view toward civil rights. Prior to 1940 it would have been impossible to get general agreement on the validity of the assumptions which are implicit in the report and on which its recommendations are based. When *Brothers Under the Skin* was published in 1943, its major argument, namely, that the powers of the federal government should be used affirmatively to wipe out discrimination, was severely criticized in the liberal press. For example, Max Lerner in an editorial in PM pointedly questioned the wisdom and the effectiveness of direct federal legislation. The then prevailing attitude toward the civil rights of minorities, as toward civil rights in general, reflected the laissez-faire philosophy of 19th century liberalism. This philosophy was concerned with the general declaration of rights rather than with their implementation or enforcement. To square this philosophy with the monstrous everyday denial of civil rights, various rationalizations were developed, some of which are still in vogue. Foremost among these rationalizations was the notion that the law represents, as William Graham Sumner said, "a sort

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of crystallization or precipitation of the mores." A pattern of discrimination, so the argument went, cannot be changed by law since it was not created by law. This negative and most unrealistic attitude toward the law was closely related to another stock assumption of 19th century liberalism, namely, that the danger to civil rights stemmed primarily from the tendency of governments to be tyrannical. So long as the government refrained from discrimination—so long as it remained "neutral"—the liberals were willing to assume that civil rights could never be in serious jeopardy.

The President's Committee has implicitly rejected these assumptions. On the first point, the report states that while "it may be impossible to overcome prejudice by law, many of the evil discriminatory practices which are the visible manifestations of prejudice can be brought to an end through proper government controls" (p. 103). On the second point, the report is equally clear: "it is essential that our rights be preserved against the tyrannical action of public officers. . . . But this is not enough today. We need more than protection of our rights against government; we need protection of our rights against private persons or groups" (p. 99). The President is quoted to the same effect: "The extension of civil rights today means not protection of the people against government, but protection of the people by government." If only for the clarity with which it rejects assumptions that have long vitiated American liberalism, the report is, therefore, of major historic importance. One might say that the report constitutes an official repudiation of the laissez-faire attitude toward civil rights.

To see the report in proper perspective, however, another consideration must be kept in mind. In the past, American liberalism has been characterized by two

deep-seated fixations: that government is inherently dangerous and that its powers must be sharply restricted (a curious attitude in a democracy); but that "private governments" can safely be given an almost unrestricted sway in the social and economic life of a democracy. Traditionally we have always given great scope and freedom to the activities of private groups even when these activities were at sharp variance with the basic tenets of constitutional law. For example, we have never seen anything inconsistent in permitting "private governments" to practise discriminations which would be unconstitutional if practised by government. In one field after another we have permitted these "private governments" to do by indirection what the governments, state and federal, are powerless to do by direct legislation. This inconsistency has become the more glaring as "private governments" have increasingly usurped many of the powers and functions of government proper. Thus it is idle to contend that the regulations of a trade union, a property protective association, a college, a company town, are immune from constitutional scrutiny merely because they are issued and formulated by "private" associations. When these regulations discriminate against citizens on the basis of race, religion, or ancestry, they are no less odious—and no less effective—than if they were enacted by a legislature. Our failure to recognize such an unmistakable social reality goes to the heart of the present-day problem of enforcing civil rights.

The report of the President's Committee contains a clear recognition of the importance of "private governments" in relation to civil rights. Conceding that "private governments" are an important means by which a democracy organizes its social and economic life, the report goes on to raise the basic issue: at what

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point do the policies and practices of "private governments" become of public concern? "The Committee is not convinced that an end to segregation in education or in the enjoyment of public services essential to people in a modern society would mean an intrusion upon the private life of the individual. In a democracy, each individual must have freedom to choose his friends and to control the pattern of his personal and family life. But we see nothing inconsistent between this freedom and a recognition of the truth that democracy also means that in going to school, working, participating in the political process, serving in the armed forces, enjoying government services in such fields as health and recreation, making use of transportation and other public accommodation facilities, and living in specific communities and neighborhoods, distinctions of race, color, and creed have no place." (p. 87)

Having indicated, so to speak, where the line should be drawn, the report proceeds to point out the basis on which government can properly concern itself with the practices and policies of "private governments": "The Committee is absolutely convinced of the importance of the private educational institution to a free society. It does not question the right of groups of private citizens to establish such institutions, determine their character and policies, and operate them. But it does believe that such schools immediately acquire a public character and importance. Invariably they enjoy government support, if only in the form of exemption from taxation and in the privilege of income-tax deduction extended to their benefactors. Inevitably, they render public service by training our young people for life in a democratic society. Consequently, they are possessed of a public responsibility from which there is no escape." (p. 66)

These same considerations were ably stated in the argument which Philip B. Perlman, Solicitor-General, recently made to the Supreme Court in asking the court, in the name of the federal government, to hold "private" restrictive covenants in violation of the Fourteenth Amendment: "The court is here concerned," he said, "with the existence of such a mass of covenants in different sections of the country as to warrant the assertion that private owners have, by contract, put into effect what amounts to legislation affecting large areas of land—legislation which, if enacted by Congress, or by a state legislature, or by a municipal council, would be invalid. Judicial enforcement of racial restrictive covenants has made this a nation of racial patch quilts, thus presenting constitutional issues which must be resolved by weighing the interests, not of a single vendor or a single vendee, but of the whole country. It is the presence of a public interest—the interest of millions of Negroes, Jews, Mexicans, and Indians and others who desire to be free to acquire and occupy property, as well as the interest of all the people in removing and avoiding the detrimental social results of segregation—which must invalidate judicial decrees enforcing racial restrictive covenants" (emphasis added). In other words, the issue in all such cases must turn on a weighing of interest and values, a balancing of risks. Where the social right to be protected is of slight value, government can doubtless afford to ignore regulations and policies which impinge on constitutional rights (it is not every discrimination that is invested with a public interest); but where the violation touches upon a functional right, then the practice is immediately of public concern and the practice or policy of the "private government" must be brought into conformity with the constitutional policy declared in the Fourteenth Amendment.

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How are the excellent recommendations of the report to be carried into effect? Obviously they will not be enacted merely because they are excellent or because they have been recommended by a President's committee. Realization of the objectives of the report implies organization which in turn implies political action. The report merely provides the platform or program in support of which a public opinion must be organized. The first step, of course, is to place the political parties on record in favor of the recommendations; the second is to force political candidates to take a position in favor of the report and its recommendations. The potential political power exists to achieve both objectives. It is to be found in the trade unions; in the churches; in the minority groups; in the already organized "civic unity" councils; and in a great variety of groups and organizations that will go along, if they are asked to do so. But unless this potentially favorable opinion is organized for political action it is idle to expect that the recommendations, or any significant part of them, will be carried into effect in the near future.

Unfortunately most of the organizations which might be expected to take the initiative in mobilizing political support for the recommendations are not in a position to do so. With few exceptions these organizations cannot participate in political action without jeopardizing their present tax-exempt status. They can assist, it is true, in organizing a public opinion; but a public opinion unrelated to political action is largely meaningless. Many of these organizations are also immobilized by inter-organizational jealousies and by "vested interests" of one kind or another. Assuming that political action is necessary, then it becomes apparent that support must be organized on the broadest possible basis, from the bottom up, not the top down. Therefore only one

test should be applied in enlisting the support of individuals and organizations: are they in favor of the recommendations? It is rather ironic that one should be forced to stress this point in discussing a civil rights program, but, if it is not stressed, support for the recommendations will be unnecessarily minimized. To repeat: organized support for the recommendations must be broadly based; it must be non-partisan; and it must aim at direct political action. The desirable way to organize this support would be for a group of individuals, nationally known, whose names inspire confidence, to issue a call for a national conference. As usually happens, however, the people are considerably in advance of their leaders on this issue. Without waiting for organizational jealousies to be ironed out and ideological differences to be resolved, support for the recommendations is being organized on a local basis. Thus in Kansas a permanent state council of civil rights has been formed to co-ordinate activities of local organizations, and similar organizations already exist in California and Colorado. To date, however, most of these efforts are lacking in direct political pertinency; a point of view is being urged, but votes are not being organized. If some action is not taken in the next few months, the report of the President's Committee will remain just that—another report.

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Several volumes published since the last Round-Up was written call for special comment in this issue. *Northwest Harvest: A Regional Stock-Taking*, which has just been published by Macmillan (\$4), consists of a collection of papers presented at the Northwest Writers' Conference at Reed College last summer. Included in these papers is an extremely interesting semi-autobiographical statement by Hor-

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ace Cayton, "The Bitter Crop." (Mr. Cayton is co-author with St. Clair Drake of the important study of Negro life in Chicago, *Black Metropolis*, published by Harcourt Brace in 1945.) Born in Seattle, Cayton attended the public schools of the city and later graduated from the University of Washington. If there existed in the America of the first quarter of this century a "favorable" environment for Negroes, it was probably on the West Coast. With few Negroes living in the Seattle of this period, Cayton and his brother and sisters lived and participated in the general culture of the area on the basis of a nearly complete equality. In fact, it was not until he enrolled in high school that Cayton was made to realize what it means to be a Negro in the United States. For this reason, the shock of realization was, perhaps, all the greater. Unable to adjust to the new role in which he found himself cast, he spent five years wandering around the Northwest, working in the wheat fields of eastern Washington, the apple orchards of Yakima, on the docks of San Francisco, in the fish camps of Alaska. Determined to achieve an understanding of the baffling "how and why" of racial prejudice, he enrolled at the university and later continued his studies at the University of Chicago. The conclusion he finally reached was that "somehow our culture and our people had failed to arrive at an emotional maturity in keeping with our technological advances. We were casualties of our own industrial civilization." Race was not the fundamental problem: it was merely a convenient mechanism to help maintain economic oppression. "The greatest tragedy of our race was not what

happened to Negroes or to any other non-white minorities, but what was happening to America. For our failure to achieve a mature culture, to arrive at a just economic system, had within it the seeds of political fascism. What was at stake was our type of civilization. Race was the screen which covered the reality." Tucked away in a regional anthology, there is a danger that this eloquent and important statement may be overlooked. It is worth the price of the book.

For much the same reason, I want also to call attention to an extremely important essay which appears in a volume by Yves R. Simon (published by Henry Holt and Company. \$3), entitled *Community of the Free*. Appearing originally in the *Review of Politics*, this essay on the "Secret Sources of the Success of the Racist Ideology" is one of the most trenchant, forceful, and brilliant statements of the real nature of "the race problem" with which I am familiar. Privileged classes, writes Simon, invariably manufacture "a system of screens" to conceal and at the same time to rationalize their attempted monopolization of social, economic, and political power. Racism is merely one of the more effective of these screens. What Simon has to say about this "system of screens" and also about "the psychology of accursed groups" is of great importance and it has never been said with greater clarity. It is most unfortunate, therefore, that this brilliant essay should be buried in a volume the title of which is so vague and general. If it were possible to do so, the essay should be printed in pamphlet form so that it might have the wide audience it deserves. I cannot recommend it too highly.

# • The Pursuit of Liberty •

CONDUCTED BY MILTON R. KONVITZ

## SEGREGATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION ATTACKED

ONE of the most heartening recent events in the fight against discrimination is the publication of the section on racial discrimination in Volume II of the Report of the President's Commission on Higher Education. Of the 28 members of the Commission, only four dissented from the Commission's pronouncements on segregation, especially as related to education in the South. (It is to be noted that the four dissenters do not question the facts stated by their 24 colleagues, nor that the Negro in the South suffers from "gross inequality" of educational opportunity. The dissenters took the position, however, that the inequality between whites and Negroes can be removed gradually and within the framework of racial segregation.)

The Commission Report establishes beyond the possibility of doubt that the Supreme Court rule of "separate but equal facilities" is a judicial fiction and a social tragedy. While the Commission notes that progress has been made since 1900 and that today there is an eagerness for improvement, the advances need to be considerably accelerated.

On the basis of the 1940 census, the Commission found that Negro adults 25 years of age and over completed on the average only 5.7 years of schooling, while the average for native white adults was 8.8 years. While 92.5 per cent of the native whites have completed at least 5 years of grade school, only 58 per cent of the Negroes have done so. While 82.7 per cent of the native whites have completed seventh grade, only 36.1 per cent of the Negroes have accomplished as much. High school data are even more

significant, the Report points out; for 7.3 per cent of the Negroes have completed 4 years of high school, as against 28.8 per cent of the native whites. In higher education only 1.3 per cent of the Negroes, in contrast to the 5.4 per cent of the native whites, have completed a four-year college course.

The situation is particularly acute in higher education. Statutes, customs, and attitudes in the South have required the denial to Negroes of admission to institutions of higher learning for whites. The "separate but equal facilities" rule "has nowhere been fully honored. Educational facilities for Negroes in segregated areas are inferior to those provided for whites. Whether one considers enrollment," states the Report, "over-all costs per student, teachers' salaries, transportation facilities, availability of secondary schools, or opportunities for undergraduate and graduate study, the consequences of segregation are always the same, and always adverse to the Negro citizen."

The Commission has convicted the Supreme Court rule of "separate but equal facilities" on three grounds: "It contravenes the equalitarian spirit of the American heritage. It has failed to operate, for history shows that inequality of service has been the omnipresent consequence of separation. It has institutionalized segregation and kept groups apart despite indisputable evidence that normal contacts among these groups tend to promote social harmony."

Approximately 75,000 Negroes are in colleges, and of these approximately 85 per cent are in 105 Negro institutions. Nowhere in the 17 Jim Crow states is

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there a single Negro institution, public or private, that approximates the offerings characteristic of a first-class state university (only Howard in the District of Columbia may be said to be equal in offerings to a first-class state university).

In 1940, 97 per cent of the degrees granted by Negro institutions were bachelor degrees, 3 per cent were masters, and none were doctorates; while 86 per cent of degrees granted by other institutions were bachelors, 12 per cent were masters, and 2 per cent were doctorates. In 1947, in unsegregated institutions only eight Negroes were awarded the Ph.D. degree, while 3,775 non-Negro students won the degree. The Commission pointed out that it is necessary to enhance the resources for Negroes to be trained for an increased number of professional degrees.

Especially acute is the situation in the 77 medical schools in the United States. Of the 5,826 physicians graduated in 1946, only 154 were Negroes, and all but 20 of these were graduated from the two Negro schools, Howard and Meharry. Of the 77 medical schools, 20 are in the

South, and not one of them admits Negroes. Of the other 55, only one-third admit Negro students. The shortage of doctors, the Report states, "serious for the white population, is a near catastrophe for the health of the Negro population, and discrimination by educational institutions is a contributing factor to it."

The situation regarding dentists is even more striking. There is one white dentist to every 2,795 white persons, but only one Negro dentist to every 12,101 Negroes. As to nursing schools: of a total of 1,280 such schools in the country in 1947, 1,214 are for whites only, 38 are for Negro and white students, and 28 for Negroes only.

On the basis of these and similar data the Commission concluded that "there will be no fundamental correction of the total condition until segregation legislation is repealed." While the Commission recognized the fact that segregation laws cannot be wished away, influences looking to their repeal are at work; "time and more vigorous effort will change public sentiment."

## NEW SUPREME COURT CASE REAFFIRMS "SEPARATE BUT EQUAL FACILITIES" RULE

IN the Spring 1947 CG we discussed the case brought by the NAACP on behalf of Ada Lois Sipuel, a Negro resident of Oklahoma, who had been denied admission to the University of Oklahoma School of Law solely on account of her race or color. The courts of Oklahoma refused to grant her legal relief, though it was admitted that she had all the requirements for admission and though the state made no provision for the separate legal education of Negro residents. The case went to the U.S. Supreme Court, arguments were heard on January 8, and

on January 12 the court unanimously held that Oklahoma must provide facilities for Miss Sipuel's legal education within the state "as soon as it does for applicants of any other group."

Except for the dramatic elements in the case—a unanimous decision four days after argument, and the stern tone of the court's unsigned one-page opinion—the decision in this case represents only a reaffirmation of the decision in *Gaines v. Canada*, 1938, that a state with Jim Crow educational laws must provide "equal" facilities to Negro students. The

case does not shake the constitutionality of the segregation laws.

In their brief filed with the Supreme Court, the NAACP lawyers asked the court to re-examine the constitutionality of the doctrine of "separate but equal facilities." They said that equality under a segregated system is a legal fiction and a judicial myth. By every index to the quality and quantity of educational facilities, the record of the 17 Jim Crow states and the District of Columbia, the brief pointed out, clearly demonstrates the inequities and second-class citizenship such a policy creates. For example, these states in 1939-1940 gave whites an average of 171 days of schooling per school term. Negroes received an average of only 156 days. The average for a white teacher was \$1,046 per year. The average

Negro teacher's salary was only \$601. Of the 17 Southern states, only one had made provision for legal education for Negroes.

This was probably the first time in many years that there was an open, frank attack in the Supreme Court on the constitutionality of racial segregation in education. The Report of the President's Commission on Higher Education ought to have strengthened the hand of the NAACP attorneys and have made it almost impossible for the court to side-track the issue or to sustain the "separate but equal" fiction. It may be assumed that at the present time the court thinks the next step ought to come from the state legislatures, but nothing can be expected from that quarter except an implementation of the "separate but equal facilities" doctrine.

## • The Bookshelf •

CONDUCTED BY HENRY C. TRACY

### THE PEOPLES OF AMERICA

AMERICANS FROM HOLLAND. By Arnold Mulder. New York, Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott. 320 pp. \$5

First of The Peoples of America Series (in preparation since 1944, under the general editorship of Louis Adamic), Arnold Mulder's book integrates the story of Dutch settlements on this continent with colonial history as a whole, then with the expansion period after 1780, and finally with the overall social, economic, and cultural development of the North Americans since the closing of the frontier. With his expert knowledge of English as well as Dutch settlements, the literature that has grown up about all of them, and the diaries, journals, etc. that were

written at the time, the author can give his narrative the proper framework. In appraising the characteristics of early settlers in "New Amsterdam," and of those who came like the English Puritans fleeing persecution two centuries later, he is scrupulously frank and fair. This study indicates the gradual merging of Dutch influence in an American blend whose origins are soon lost sight of—even in language elements—but which leave their impress on the side of solid business enterprise, democratic instincts, resistance to dictatorship, and the love of clean and decent living. COMMON GROUND readers will remember their preview of the book in Mr. Mulder's thoughtful discussion of "The 'Lost Generation' of Dutch Ameri-

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cans," a chapter from this volume printed in CG's Autumn 1947 issue.

Theodore Blegen's *Grass Roots History* (University of Minnesota Press. \$3) supports a thesis and tells a story. The former is that history must be concerned more with the common life of everyday people, less with the political and catastrophic. In harmony with that, Dr. Blegen, chief authority in the U.S. on Norwegian American immigration, tells the story of migration from Norway in terms of letters and other writings of the immigrants themselves. These he has sought out at great pains from among records of long ago, treasured both here and in Norway. Simply and eloquently expressed, they convey not only the freshness of that early adventure but also the spirit of the newcomers, eager and alive to every aspect of the new world they hope to make their own. Letters from pioneer women are among the best; their concern with the care and schooling of their children and the social and religious life of the new settlements shows the ends toward which these new-made Americans worked. The men's problem is chiefly one of adaptation to material change. Transition is for all alike the main theme.

*Saga in Steel and Concrete*, by Kenneth Bjork (Norwegian American Historical Association. Northfield, Minn. \$4), is the first extended account of a migration of technical leaders from overseas, a field not touched by previous historians. Included are the personal stories of engineers and architects from Norway, trained there or elsewhere in Europe, who as immigrants put their talents at the disposal of America in its period of greatest expansion, or, coming later, rose to the top of their profession. The archives of the Norwegian American Technical Society made possible a detailed account of the personal careers and achievements of men on all technical fronts. Of the greatness

of their contribution the general public has not the faintest conception. To them we owe the discovery of the caterpillar principle used in farm tractors (later in tanks), the automatic gas heater, a revolution in tunnelling that made possible the New York subway, and countless improvements in construction, machinery, metallurgy, chemistry, and general engineering. Attitudes of the group as a whole, on social and economic problems and organization, are also covered in this fascinating book.

When Douglas L. Rights undertook to write the history of *The American Indian in North Carolina* (Duke University Press. \$5), he was doing justice to those "peoples of America" who were our earliest immigrants and deserved more consideration, as people, than they ever received. This author, a Moravian minister, has made study of the tribes a lifelong avocation; is an authority on Indian history, traits, and folkways. His account is accurate and appealing, with photos from life and replicas of the John White Pictures (from the British Museum) made in the 1850s.

In *Meet the Amish*, Charles S. Rice and John B. Shenk give us a pictorial study (Rutgers University Press. \$5) of a people who have preserved a way of life brought here in 1714 and dating from 16th century origins in Europe. The introductory text provides a history of the religious immigration that sent this branch of the sect from Swiss and German homes through the Netherlands to Pennsylvania, there to found their colony and become known as the "Pennsylvania Dutch." Faith, character, occupations, education, ceremonies, diversions, and language are well interpreted and the hundred odd page and half-page photographs of hard-to-take subjects provide an interesting portrait-study of a highly successful and distinctive group-life.

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*Colonists in Bondage*, by Abbot Emerson Smith (University of North Carolina Press. \$5), tells the story of white people who, unlike the Dutch, Norwegians, and others, did not find freedom in America. Prior to 1776, these found it only after a term of servitude, if at all—many dying from the hardships they endured. It is gratifying to see in print a documented and scholarly account of these unfortunates who from 1607 to the year of liberty were the main means by which population was recruited in southern colonies. "In-

dentured" as servants, they were actually sold as slaves and so treated. Broken by that ordeal, hardly one in ten could enjoy freedom when it came. In private hands, with profit as the motive, men were cajoled and even kidnapped to swell the paying cargoes of the ships. After 1700, "redemptionists"—paying part of the passage money—had shorter terms and an easier lot. The author, a Rhodes Scholar, late on the Columbia faculty, is now head of the Historical Section, U.S. Naval Forces, Europe.

## VALUES IN DEMOCRACY

*Good Will Days*, edited by Hilah Codlington Paulmier and Robert Haven Schauffler, is the latest and last of a series of anthologies, *Our American Holidays* (Dodd, Mead. \$2.75). Designed for use in school and civic programs, this collection of prose, poetry, stories, and plays is a treasury in itself for any reader whose impulses are on the side of racial goodwill: luminous bits and arresting clarifications at every turn. We've had much discussion about democracy—what it is, theoretically, historically—and shall have more. Here is democracy in action.

A symposium on *Physical Science and Human Values* (Princeton University Press. \$3) reports a conference at Princeton in which over eighty scientists took part; shows that leaders in nuclear science, no longer aloof from human problems, intend to face their social responsibilities squarely. Notable among the addresses is that of F. C. S. Northrop (Yale) who sees ideological conflicts far more dangerous than atomic bombs. He reasons that the philosophies underlying these conflicts are rooted in differing interpretations of natural science. Ours, based on

Locke (whose disciples led the American revolution) posits individuals free by nature; government for them existing only by the consent of the governed. For a Marxist, individual human nature has no meaning apart from society and the historic process. But he adds that our derivative interpretations have not kept up with the progress of science; hence our ideology is blurred in an atomic age long past Newton and Galileo. Further discussion raises the concept of the person, as distinguished from the individual.

*The Person and the Common Good*, by Jacques Maritain (Scribner's. \$2), makes a clear distinction between the person and the individual. The latter may be anarchic and asocial, but the liberty of the human person is rated as of more value than all else in the universe. The contrast appears more sharply when Maritain describes the person as a social unit living for the common good, whereas an individual lives primarily for himself. But this common good differs again from a public or political good (totalitarian) which sacrifices its units to itself since it recognizes no worth in

#### THE BOOKSHELF

them save in relation to the state. This distinction corrects a flaw in any ideology that allows freedom to every man as an individual regardless of the common good in which men live and function as persons, not as atomic selves.

Robert K. Carr in *Federal Protection of Civic Rights* (Cornell University Press. \$3) recalls that a tradition stemming from colonial oppression has made Americans tend to regard the state itself as an enemy of civil rights. But since the threat from the activities of private individuals has of late become serious, state aid is now invoked to protect less privileged persons or groups from invasion of such rights by the more privileged. Intimidation and violence resorted to against Negroes, Nisei, and other minorities are common instances. To make federal protection effective, a Civil Liberties Unit was created in the Department of Justice in 1939. This book reports its activities and is second of the Cornell Studies in Civil Liberty.

Striking evidence of genuine assimilation is given in *Hawaiian Americans* by

Edwin G. Burrows, anthropologist (Yale University Press. \$3). This fine analysis of native Hawaiian, Oriental, and Euro-American cultures intermingling shows that the latter won prestige on its own merits and without resort to arrogant behaviors or show of superiority. Island-born children of Orientals threw off the parental taboos and adopted American ways because they preferred them. Among adults a sense of inferiority (notable from the first) was sometimes overcome by aggression or withdrawal, but more commonly by co-operation resulting in true assimilation.

Blake Clark's *Hawaii the 49th State* (Doubleday. \$3), liveliest account to date of the Island's people and problems, shows why territorial status should end. The reasons are many and sound. Enlightened labor relations since 1945 is a strong point. Best reason—and one that shames the other 48 states—is that "Hawaii has never known a Ku Klux Klan, nor a Christian Front. It has never had a race riot. Here men of all races address one another as 'Mister.' "

#### TO BE AN AMERICAN

Lloyd Morris in *Postscript to Yesterday* (Random House. \$5) quotes George Santayana: "To be an American is itself almost a moral condition, an education, and a career." A survey of fifty years of change—social, moral, and material—this Postscript finds that "American ideals remain firm, but American life has gone another road." Blame is pinned on a system that corrupts both the motives and the goals of those who support it. On the credit side, among other things, Mr. Morris cites women's movements for reform and social justice, with Jane Addams as "deputy

for conscience"; W. D. Howells' protests; and the hard, clean-cut appraisals of later novelists who saw where our goals had been missed and who sought but failed to find directives. Most excellent is Mr. Morris' analysis of social philosophers Henry Adams, John Dewey, Thorstein Veblen. Of these Dewey alone has lived to offer us a blueprint for social change applicable today, of which a complete outline is here given.

Cleveland Amory's *The Proper Bostonians* (E. P. Dutton. \$4.50) is an amiable account of persons who believed

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(and still do) that to be a first-family Bostonian automatically confers superiority and qualifies for admission to (or retention in) a social register closed to all comers since 1879, regardless of personal achievement, culture, or wealth. Despite this provincial standard, some members have achieved real distinction, notably the Adams tribe and the Lowells. To them justice is done in this highly entertaining, humorous, and anecdotal narrative of the Brahman clans, by an offshoot of one of them.

In Barrows Mussey's *Yankee Life* (Knopf. \$6) we get a view of early Americans that has nothing to do with birth, family, race, or faith, from the personal writings of men and women who lived when the "Yankee" character was forming. Mostly these were unknown persons, whose letters and diaries tell what life was like from 1770 on. A few became famous, but the most revealing records are from obscure but stout-hearted souls like the Harvard student who in 1821 wrote in his diary, "Resistance to tyrants is obedience to God." A diversified selection.

B. A. Botkin's *New England Folklore* (Crown. \$4), conceded the best book in its field to date, gives us the popular and somewhat legendary tradition of what the plain people are or have been like in the region east of the Hudson and north through Maine. It is done by folk tales—500 of them—and songs, ballads, and rhymes, to say nothing of epitaphs, "a form of folk rhyme." For each of the five parts of this engaging treasury, Editor Botkin writes an introduction. His wide experience as folklorist, as president of the American Folklore Society and Fellow of the Library of Congress, has made possible the collection and classifying of 914 pages of the lore from this region alone.

John Bartlow Martin's *Indiana* (Knopf. \$4.50) interprets the "Hoosiers," a people very close to being the "American type." Settled in the path of the great migration, they absorbed from that current some of nearly every old-world stock, blended with them, and preserved their character as plain folk. Indiana was a proving ground for ideologies, industrial enterprises, and labor movements. To Indiana came George Rapp in 1814, with his religious communal colony. Rapp's "Harmonie" changed hands ten years later, to become "New Harmony" and a socialist experiment under Robert Owen, wealthy Scottish reformer. At Terre Haute, Eugene Debs was born, son of an immigrant family, who in 1910 hurried to the defense of two other Indiana boys, John and James McNamara. Elwood, Indiana, was Willkie's home town. Ball Bros. glass jars and Studebaker cars are native Indiana enterprises, and among the native sons are Lew Wallace, Booth Tarkington, and now Ross Lockridge Jr. (See new fiction list).

Bill Mauldin, in *Back Home* (Wm. Sloane. \$3.50), after five years with our Army tells in text and cartoons what the overall type of American soldier is like at the war's end and what his America looks like to him. The cartoons are of his best, and the running comment, besides humor, has a seriousness and deep penetration.

*Americans in Perspective*, edited by Henry Steele Commager (Random House. \$4), in a series of selections gives us views of our people and their institutions as they have appeared to foreign observers from 1780 to the present time. Among the earliest are Crèvecoeur and De Tocqueville; among the later, a Swedish critic, Victor Vinde, here in 1942. Vinde deplorés the ignorance which governs the relations between countries and their peo-

ple; cites the Nazi downfall as due to Hitler's failure to see what kind of people the Americans are.

*We, the People*, by Leo Huberman (Harper. \$3.75), is an enlarged revision of his book of 1932, a people's history, for the people, in terms of the common economy and criticism of policies that have made depression chronic or recurrent for all but a small minority, all through the years.

The Negro Year Book, 1947, edited by Jessie Parkhurst Guzman (Department of Records and Research of Tuskegee Institute, Alabama. \$4.50), is an extremely valuable handbook giving in Part I detailed data on the Negro in the U.S.:

population, intellectual and other achievements, the sciences, education, the church, the national economy, agriculture, business, politics, the armed forces, civil rights, race relations, health and housing, crime, the press, the arts, music, theatre, movies, radio, literature. Parts II, III, and IV are concerned with the Negro in Africa, Europe, and Latin America; while Part V contains an annotated bibliography.

One World Cookery (International Institute of New York City, 99 Park Avenue. \$1) is a collection of favorite recipes from 19 countries, contributed by women of the various nationality groups connected with the Institute.

## BIOGRAPHIES—IN BRIEF

William P. Helm's *Harry Truman* (Duell, Sloan, Pearce. \$3) is the political biography of the unknown county commissioner who was Pendergast's choice for Senator because the boss needed a *clean man* on his ticket. Told by one who played an important role in shaping this man's later career, it makes good reading and tends toward a fairer view than the President's opponents would wish us to have.

*F.D.R.—His Personal Letters—Early Years*, edited by Elliott Roosevelt (Duell, Sloan, Pearce. \$5), is the first of three projected volumes and contains the first letter, written at the age of five, on through to graduation from Harvard in 1904. The series will contribute source material for the study of the background and training as well as essential character of the man. Rare family photographs and reproductions of many letters and early drawings add to the general appeal of the book.

F. O. Matthiessen's *The James Family* (Knopf. \$6.75) is a group biography of Henry James, Sr., his sons William and Henry, and daughter Alice James. It is more: an interpretation of their contribution to American thought and life through the medium of their own writings, public or private, a good part of which are inaccessible to the average reader. Henry James, Sr., son of an immigrant from County Cavan, Ireland, left the stamp of his independent spirit and keen mind on all three of his children. But the democratic principle, incandescent in the father, burned brightest in William James. For proof, here's his lecture, "What Makes a Life Significant," piercing that "cloud-bank of ancestral blindness" which he saw to be the root of every stupid and sanguinary mistake made by the world's rulers.

Van Wyck Brooks' new volume, *The Times of Melville and Whitman* (Dutton. \$5), is, like Matthiessen's latest, a

study in America's cultural history. But, while Melville and Whitman are chosen as typical for the period covered (1840-1890), that expansive time is used as a cornucopia from which pour countless characters swarming westward like bees from a hive—gold-seekers, gamblers, cut-throats, and vagabonds, as well as poets, dreamers, prophets, and writers to record the scene. Done in swift tempo, this narrative is like a flood of incredible and kaleidoscopic content in which events flash and disappear at a pace inducing vertigo. Each major person is seen as a part of this time setting, in a blend of glamour and reality rarely attained.

*Kosciuszko*, by Miecislaus Haiman (Polish Institute. \$3), is a flashback to the time when the Polish patriot, released from a Russian prison after the failure of an insurrection patterned by the American Revolution, returned to America, in 1797, to be received there with honor and love. A well prepared completion of a biography of which the first part was published earlier.

*Gallant General*, by Antoni Gronowicz (Scribner's. \$2.50), is a biography of Kosciuszko, personal, not political, written for young people and in a stirring attractive style. Incident of the stowaway Negro boy who wished to return to Europe with the General to fight there for freedom, shows the devotion to the hero of true liberty on the part of enslaved Americans, many of whom he freed by purchase.

*Blessed Is the Match*, by Marie Syrkin (Knopf. \$3.50), is the poignant story of the Jewish resistance movement in Europe as told to Miss Syrkin. Here are annals of unsurpassed heroism and self-sacrifice by parachutists from Palestine who brought aid to beleaguered Jews in lands held by the Nazis. Told by survivors of ghetto barricades and Vilna woods, these horror tales could only be

faced by dwelling on the vitality and high spirit of the participants. Throughout the relentless unfolding of the bestial drama, the reader is shocked by the utter helplessness of the victims, their sense of complete desertion by the rest of the world; he cannot escape a strong feeling of both personal and world guilt. The facts as presented here make out a convincing case for a homeland in Palestine as the only possible solution for European Jews today. A documented account of the resistance movement, with notes on Haganah and "illegal" immigration, this is engrossing and painful reading.

*David Lilienthal*, by Willson Whitman (Holt. \$3), is the story of one man's part in a great public enterprise designed to benefit the entire South, especially the retarded rural districts, but hampered at every step by sectional interests and the utility corporations. Successful handling of such obstacles proved the man's fitness for the still greater responsibility with which he is now entrusted.

Edward Doan's story of *The La Follettes and the Wisconsin Idea* (Rinehart. \$4) is also that of Progressivism and the fight to decontrol economic power affecting public welfare but in private hands; reveals what insurgency can do in state and in Senate to break the hold of corporate interests on legislation.

*American Promise*, by Sulamith Ish Kishor (Behrman House. \$2.50), carries a series of biographical fragments proving that on the occasion of the discovery of America, and in every phase of its colonization, settlement, expansion, and in its wars of liberation or for defense or for democracy, Jews have been active to promote the American way. The telling is dramatic, the illustrations good, the incidents new to many readers. The book is of interest to all, but perhaps designed mainly for school-age—the age when

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"The Meaning of America" (last chapter) should sink the deepest.

*The Loud Red Patrick*, by Ruth McKenney (Harcourt, Brace. \$2.50), is the family-style life of her grandfather, refugee from the Auld Sod, whose "Origins" mortified the author's mother and her five aunts—the more so because he pub-

licized his forebears as sod-hut dwellers, "about ten children and one starveling cow to a hut." Violently democratic, he felt called upon to denounce all sham and dishonesty, which he did seriously. But the result is hilarious and yields a background for *My Sister Eileen*, the first McKenney best-seller.

## FICTION NOTES

When Ross Lockridge, Jr. put twenty pounds of manuscript on a publisher's desk, the career of his novel, *Raintree County* (Houghton Mifflin. \$3.95), had begun. When Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer backed it for a screen hit, success was assured. The six years spent in the writing might have assured nothing; what won out for it was and is a new blend of fantasy with realism. The realism deals with actual events and behaviors involving one man (presented as a typical U.S. citizen, and from Indiana), his family, friends, and political and social alliances. These actualities mirror the life of America between 1844 and 1892 by means of flashbacks during the action story of a single day. So much for realism and the small-town outlook on life. But the hero, John Shawnessy, is a dual person. In public life he is Mr. Shawnessy, the dutiful citizen, the family man, observant of taboos and playing correctly the game called "American Society." Well hidden from public sight is the faun-like twin, Mr. Shawnessy, a psychic dawn-man who knows nothing of the proprieties, is a fugitive from all boundaries, whose dream-type adventures are all tangled up with Mr. Shawnessy's private life. The capricious adventures of this uninhibited twin, sometimes poetic, often bawdy, will intrigue many readers, cause eyebrow lifting

on the part of quite a few. Basically serious, the book has sound social insight.

In *Hodding Carter*, who writes *Flood Crest* (Rinehart. \$2.75), reactionary politics and an institutionalized white supremacy myth have a determined foe. Whether as editor of a crusading southern newspaper or as tough-minded novelist, Carter attacks fearlessly, in this novel exposing relentlessly the means by which a southern demagogue gains preferment.

John Hewlett proves again in *Wild Grape* (Whittlesey House. \$3) that he knows his rural Georgia and can make clear to an outsider how things are and why. A known white rapist of a colored girl can preserve his social status as influential citizen while his victim and her white-skinned child must live in hiding or suffer abuse from white and Negro alike. Chief interest is the author's absolute fidelity to the idiom of his characters and his ability to foreshadow their feelings even before they speak.

Stories by Pearl Buck, collected under the title *Far and Near* (John Day. \$2.75) show the same deep reading of Oriental minds that have made her novels memorable. Here the contact is between the culture of Chinese or Japanese with that of Americans. These stories, with settings sometimes "far" (Japan, China), some-

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times "near" (e.g. New Jersey), have high intercultural value, interpreting to both sides behaviors that seem strange to each. Even beyond that, here are instances where the deeper human feeling that lies below the cultural level triumphs over reactions dictated by usage and training, baring humanity's common ground.

*In a Hawaiian Valley*, by Kathleen Dickenson Mellen (Hastings House. \$3.50), is a kindly interpretation of the Hawaiians, in story form, with a non-fiction introduction by the author who has long known them intimately and well; knows them to be "of far more substance than merely swishing skirts and tinkling ukuleles." These stories reveal the humor and pathos of their inner lives, also their pride in the greatness of the Polynesian race. Its fine qualities they rightly want to preserve uncorrupted.

*The Horncasters*, by Victor H. Johnson (Greenberg. \$2.75), a grim southern story by a Maryland-born author who has seen grim experiences himself, nevertheless has room in it for vivid nature touches and the kind of writing that has in it the breath of actuality—fields, people, common humdrum life as well as racial tensions and sleeping dangers. Early and intimate knowledge of a rough-and-tumble world that would be endlessly fascinating to live in but for the injustice and oppression that mar it make the background for verity; and the swift, sharp characterizations come from an authentic literary gift.

Borghild Dahl's *Karen* (Random House. \$2.50), for teen-age girls "and their mothers," well works out Dr. Bleegen's thesis that the main theme in any immigrant story is transition. Karen's energy, efficiency, and prompt attack on any and all of the predicaments that this transition involves—from breaking homes in Norway to breaking in a prairie

farm in Dakota—make the novel an outstanding one.

*The Lost Violin*, by Clara Ingram Judson (Houghton Mifflin. \$2.25), also for teen-agers, embroiders the same theme for a Bohemian family, from the first day of arrival on our shores through the first years of adjustment in Chicago. Woven around the loss of a precious violin, a Mittcnwald, the tale follows the family fortunes, pyramids to high excitement in the recovery of the violin, the coming of Dvorak, and a girl's part in the Bohemian festival.

The Assorted Sisters in Florence Crancl Means' story (Houghton Mifflin. \$2.50) are girls of just those national origins among which clashing prejudice may be expected. Meeting in high school and a Denver settlement, they gradually break through barriers, form a fast bond of fellowship, and excel even the settlement workers in finding common ground between the folk of their respective communities. A lively story, told with great good humor.

In Alice Williams' *On Hampton Street* (Longmans, Green. \$2.50), we learn what life is like for a thrifty Welsh family in the U.S. where the father works in the mines and every child has a part in the work and pleasure of a well-ordered home. For ages 8 to 12.

*Constancia Lona*, by Alida Malkus (Doubleday. \$2.50), is a story of student life in Ecuador. Her ambition to win an American university scholarship leads the heroine through strenuous undertakings and colorful episodes, always with a background of family tradition. Lively contacts with exchange students from the U.S. who share Constancia's interest in Ecuadorian art and history lead to a charming romance. The novel reveals high educational standards in Latin America and the merging of an ancient culture with a new way of life.

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## THE SPOILAGE

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A factual record of the causes and consequences of the evacuation to detention camps of Japanese Americans. Traces the course of a minority group from law-abiding citizens to people without a legal basis for existence. Volume I of Japanese American Evacuation and Resettlement. \$3.75.

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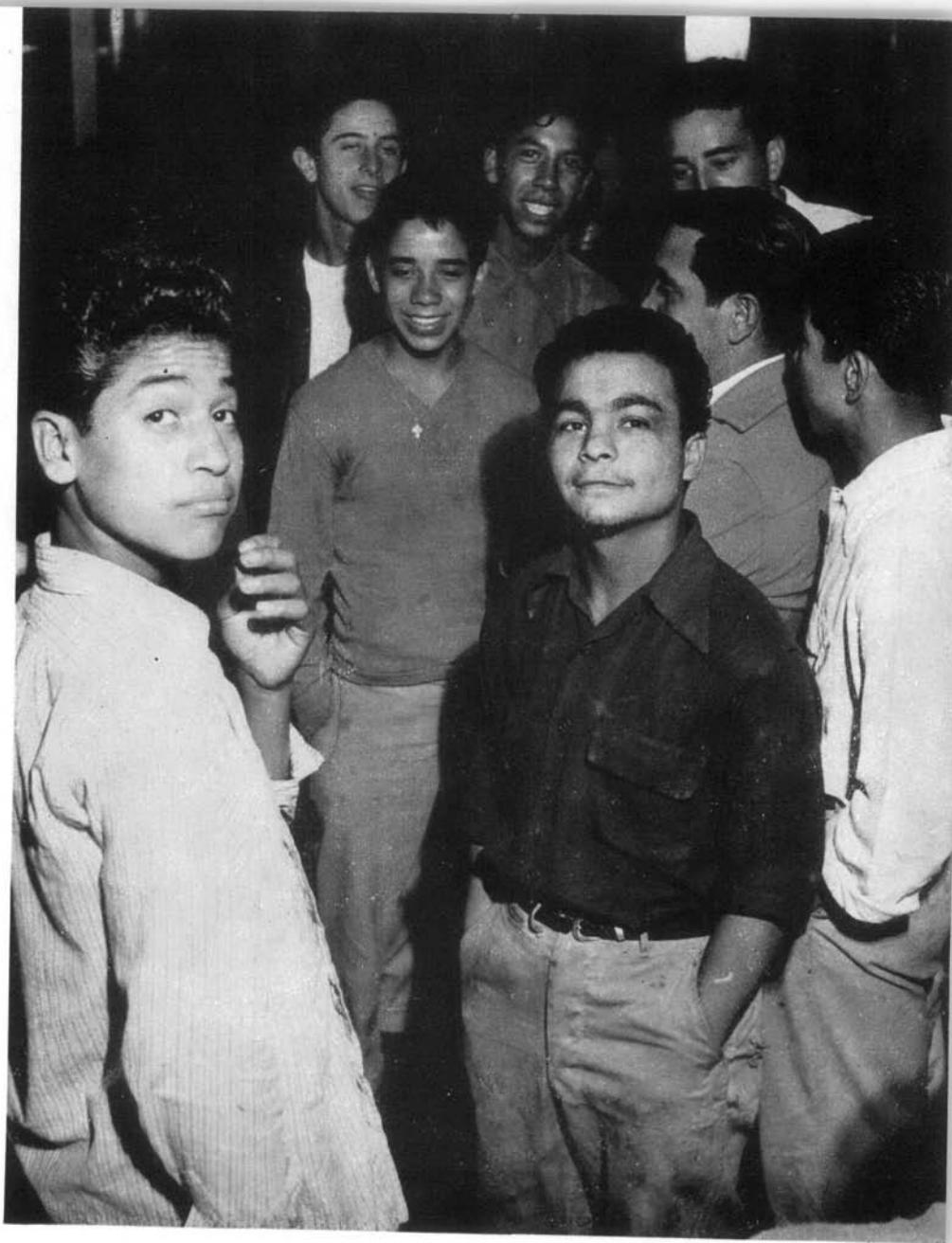
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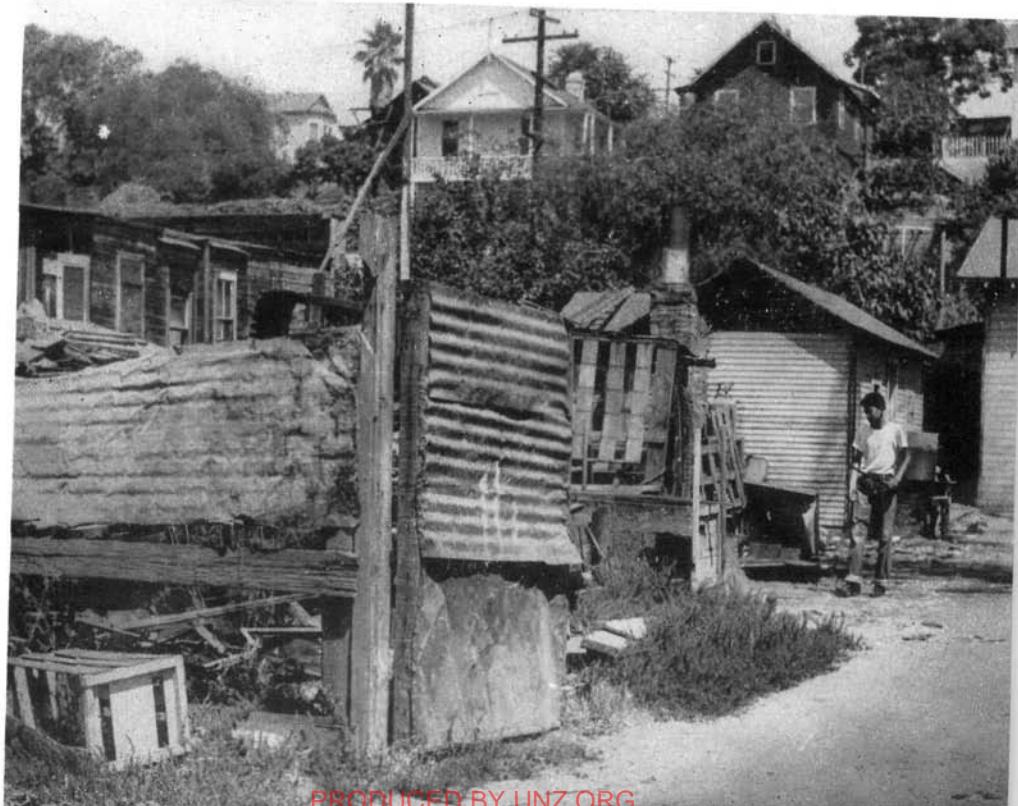
"At this dance in a school at the top of Palo Verde in Los Angeles (sponsored by the Delinquency Prevention Division of the Los Angeles County Probation Department, which works with youngsters in tension areas where they are likely to become maladjusted), boys and girls were in separate groups at first, tense and unable to contact each other easily. They began mingling only when the lights were turned low. They were very fearful of me as an outsider and photographer who might use pictures for police purposes and involve them in delinquency charges."

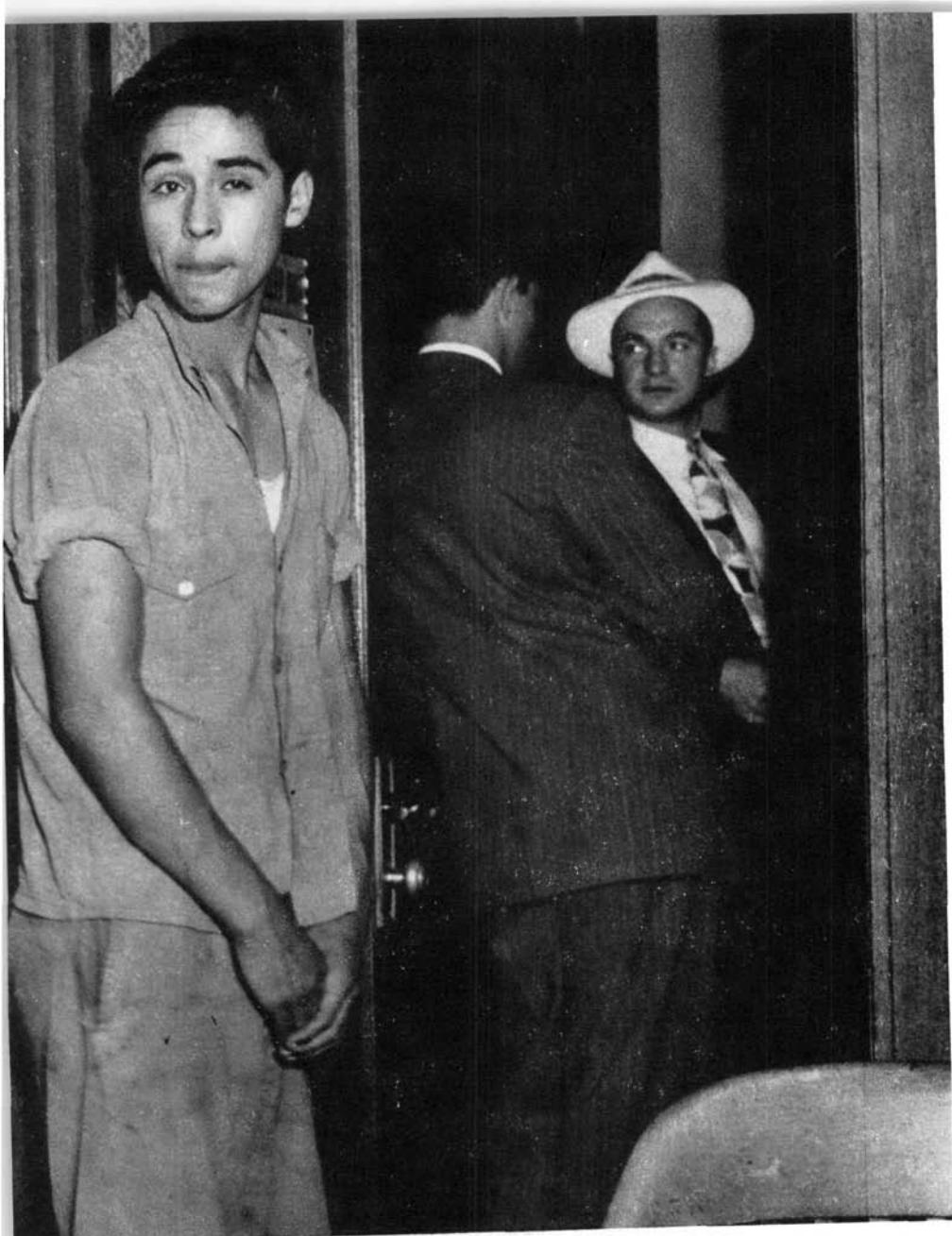
"THE OLDER JUNIOR-HIGH SCHOOL GIRL has charge of the 8 younger children in this family. Six of them share these two bunk beds. An older brother is the only breadwinner. The pre-school children are markedly undernourished since they have no chance at the school lunches that help balance the diet of the older ones the months they go to school. When I asked one of the little girls if she was hungry, she said, 'No, I just don't like to eat.' This pride is general."





"THE REMOTE AND UNKEMPT isolation of Palo Verde (above), in the heart of Los Angeles, seems to belong to the city only because by looking up from the bottom, one can see the City Hall. (Below) The Hollow—another 'forgotten village.' "

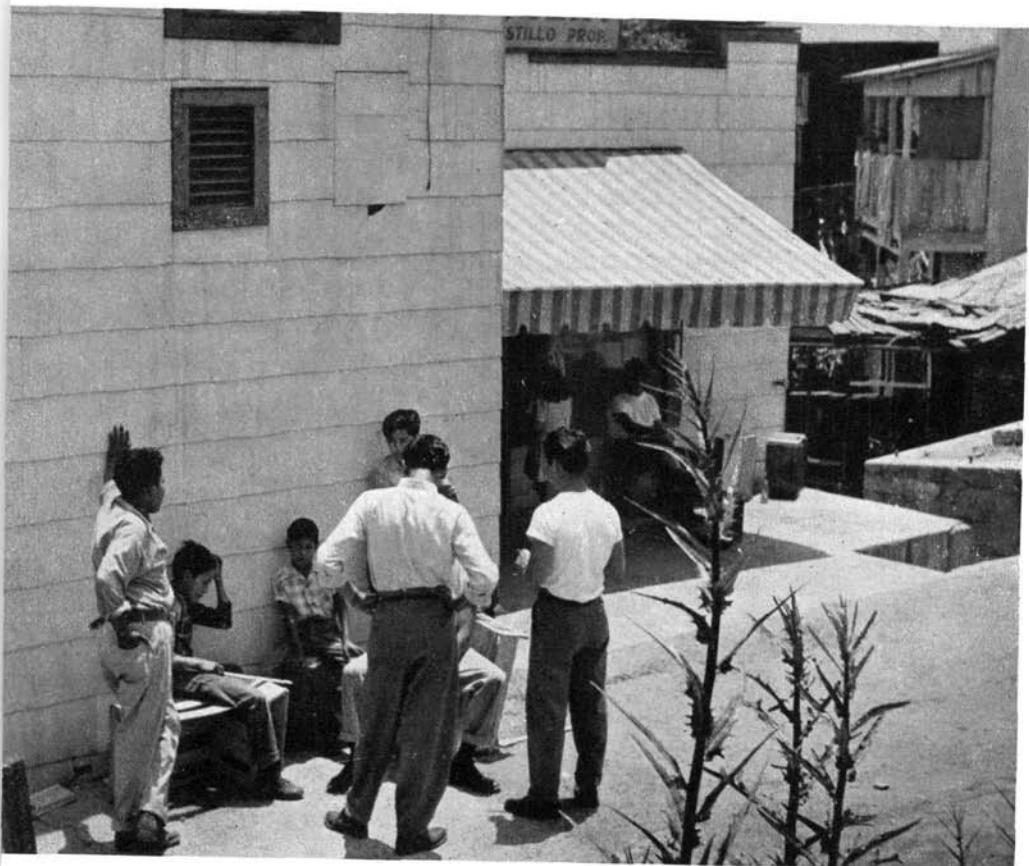




"THIS FRIGHTENED FOURTEEN-YEAR-OLD from San Fernando Valley had been picked up in the morning by the Los Angeles police while walking on the street and held all day at the police station. No, there were no charges against him, I was told."

"A COUPLE AT THE DANCE mentioned in the first picture. The Pachuco girl wears the popular high pompadour and zoot-suit slacks (drapes). The girls in the background wear the short skirts and high socks characteristic of other Pachucas."





"A GANG HANG-OUT at the top of Palo Verde. No place for these youngsters to go; few jobs; no recreational facilities; nothing to do but think up excitement."

"THERE WERE BOTH BOYS AND GIRLS at this dance when I came in, but the boys disappeared as soon as they saw me. I was continually running into this fear of the stranger who, they think, may be a police agent. As for the girls, despite the tenseness in their faces, they are engaged in friendly conversation."





"HOME FOR THIS CHILD is a tent in the San Fernando Valley colony. I might join Gene Coon on page 52 and say she hasn't 'a worry in the world. Not yet.' "